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50¢/Free to Deployed Areas

VIRUS OUTBREAK



Back on board

DOD rolls out new guidance easing travel restrictions

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Initial Entry Training Soldiers wait on board to depart Columbia Metropolitan Airport in Columbia, S.C., for Fort Sam Houston in Texas on May 8.

ALEXANDRA SHEA / U.S. Army Reserve

Air Force fails to deal with racial disparities in military justice, report says

By JOHN VANDIVER
Stars and Stripes

The Air Force has failed to make reforms to fix racial disparities within its justice system and withheld documents to hide its "abysmal record," a watchdog group said.

"The Air Force has concealed records and discredited its own statistics, with leadership later doubting that disparities were as severe as their own data reveals, contrary to conclusions reached by (gov-

ernment and independent) investigations," Protect Our Defenders said Wednesday in a report on racial disparities in military justice.

In 2017, the group published a report that found racial inequalities across the military justice system, with the Air Force cited as having some of the most extreme discrepancies.

In the Air Force, black airmen on average were 71% more likely to face court-martial or nonjudicial punishment than

their white counterparts, according to the group's investigation at the time.

"Four years after the Air Force admitted the need to examine racial disparities, no recommendations have been formally made nor have any changes been implemented," the report said.

Protect Our Defenders is led by retired Col. Don Christensen, a former chief prosecutor for the Air Force.

In 2019, the Government Accountability Office launched its own probe, which found

that in the Army, Navy, Marine Corps and Air Force, black, Hispanic and male service members were more likely to be investigated than white and female service members.

"They were also more likely to be tried in general and special courts-martial, the GAO found in an analysis based on data from 2013-2017. However, the GAO found no statistically significant difference by sex or ethnicity in terms of convictions."

SEE REPORT ON PAGE 5

BUSINESS/WEATHER

Cyprus to cover costs for tourists hit by virus

Associated Press

NICOSIA, Cyprus — Cyprus is pledging to cover all costs for anyone testing positive for the coronavirus while on vacation on the eastern Mediterranean island nation, according to a letter obtained by The Associated Press on Wednesday.

The Cypriot government says it will cover lodging, food, drink and medication for COVID-19 patients and their families. Patients will only have to pay for the taxi ride to the airport and the flight back home.

A 100-bed hospital will cater exclusively to foreign travelers who test positive. About 112 intensive care units equipped with 200 respirators will be reserved for critically-ill patients. A 500-room "quarantine hotel" will be reserved for patients' family members

and other close contacts.

The pledge came in a five-page letter dated Tuesday that was sent out to governments, airlines and tour operators outlining strict health and hygiene protocols that the government is enacting to woo visitors to the tourism-reliant country.

International air travel to Cyprus begins June 9, initially from 19 countries, with passengers required to undergo a COVID-19 test three days prior to departure. That measure will be lifted June 20 for 13 countries, including Germany, Finland, Israel, Greece and Norway.

Officials say travel will be expanded to more countries depending on a constant evaluation of their infection rates.

EXCHANGE RATES

Military rate	
Euro (cents) (May 28)	\$1.08
Dollar (cents) (May 28)	€0.94
British pound (May 28)	\$1.20
Japanese yen (May 28)	105.00
South Korean won (May 28)	1,201.00
Nonofficial rates	
Bahrain (Dinar)	0.3776
British pound	\$1.2257
Chinese yuan (Yuan)	2.7126
China (Yuan)	6.7870
Egypt (Pound)	15.9888
Hong Kong (Dollar)	7.9522
Hungary (Forint)	318.02
India (Rupee)	35.93
Japan (Yen)	107.77
Kuwait (Dinar)	0.3088
Norway (Krone)	9.8991
Poland (Zloty)	4.72
Poland (Zloty)	4.04
Saudi Arabia (Riyal)	3.7561
Singapore (Dollar)	1.4203
South Korea (Won)	1,238.30

SWITZERLAND (Franc) 0.9700

Thailand (Baht) 31.92

Turkey (Lira) 6.7762

Nonofficial exchange rates are those available to customers at military banking facilities in the country of issuance for Japan, Saudi Arabia, Germany, the United Kingdom and the United Kingdom. For nonlocal currency exchange rates (i.e., purchasing British pounds in Germany), commercial rates at military banking facility. Commercial rates are interbank rates provided for reference when buying currency. All figures are foreign currencies converted to U.S. dollars. The pound, which is represented in dollars-to-pound, and the euro, which is dollars-to-euro.)

INTEREST RATES

Prime rate	3.25
Discount rate	0.75
Federal funds market rate	0.05
3-month bill	0.13
30-year bond	1.44

WEATHER OUTLOOK

THURSDAY IN THE MIDDLE EAST



THURSDAY IN EUROPE



FRIDAY IN THE PACIFIC



The weather is provided by the American Forces Network Weather Center, 2nd Weather Squadron at Offutt Air Force Base, Neb.

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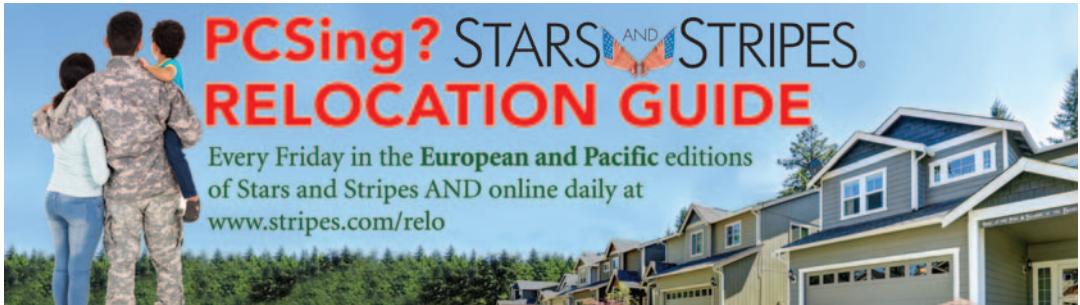
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RELOCATION GUIDE

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MILITARY

'Unsafe and unprofessional'



Navy says Russian fighters intercepted P-8A Poseidon over international airspace

Stars and Stripes

Russian pilots in two Sukhoi Su-35 fighters flying in an "unsafe and unprofessional manner" intercepted a U.S. Navy P-8A Poseidon reconnaissance aircraft over the eastern Mediterranean Sea on Tuesday, according to the 6th Fleet.

The Russians intercepted the Poseidon over international waters and flew nearby for 65 minutes, according to a Navy statement issued Wednesday.

"The intercept was determined to be unsafe and unprofessional due to the Russian pilots taking close station on each wing of the P-8A simultaneously, restricting

the P-8A's ability to safely maneuver," the statement said.

The incident is the third since April involving Russian and American fliers in that area, the statement added. The Americans did not provoke the Russian actions, according to the Navy.

The Russian aircraft were operating in international airspace, but their "interaction was irresponsible," the statement said. "We expect them to operate within international standards set to ensure safety and to prevent incidents. Actions like these increase the potential for midair collisions."

news@stripes.com



Russian Su-35 aircraft intercept a P-8A Poseidon assigned to the U.S. 6th Fleet over the Mediterranean Sea on Tuesday. According to a Navy statement issued Wednesday, the Russians intercepted the Poseidon over international waters and flew nearby for 65 minutes.

U.S. Navy photos

Pentagon's No. 2 IG official resigns after being passed over

Associated Press

WASHINGTON — The No. 2 official in the Pentagon's office of inspector general, Glenn Fine, resigned Tuesday, several weeks after he was effectively removed as head of a special board to oversee auditing of the \$2.2 trillion coronavirus economic relief package.

His departure, effective June 1, is the latest move in a broader shakeup of government watchdog agencies that Demo-

crats call a politically motivated campaign by President Donald Trump to weaken government oversight.

On May 15, Trump fired the State Department's inspector general, Steve Linick, whose office was critical of what it saw as political bias in the State Department's management. In April, Trump also fired Michael Atkinson, the intelligence community inspector general who forwarded to Congress a whistleblower complaint that

ultimately led to the president's impeachment in the House.

A spokeswoman for the Pentagon's Office of Inspector General, Dwrena Allen, said Fine was not asked to resign. Fine issued a brief written statement lauding the importance of government watchdogs.

"The role of inspectors general is a strength of our system of government," Fine said. "They provide independent oversight to help improve government op-

erations in a transparent way. They are a vital component of our system of checks and balances, and I am grateful to have been part of that system."

Fine, who received his law degree from Harvard, came to the Pentagon's inspector general's office as the No. 2 official in 2015 and had previously been inspector general at the Department of Justice from 2000 to 2011. He also is a former assistant United States attorney in Washington, D.C.

PACIFIC

Air Force sends bombers over South China Sea

BY CAITLIN DOORNBOS
Stars and Stripes

Two Air Force B-1B Lancer bombers flew over the South China Sea on Tuesday, the latest in an increasing number of United States military demonstrations in the region.

Bombers deployed to Guam flew the mission to demonstrate the Air Force's ability to operate anywhere international law allows, "at the time and tempo of our choosing," Pacific Air Forces said via Twitter on Wednesday.

The Lancers, originally from the 9th Expeditionary Bomb Squadron at Dyess Air Force Base, Texas, were at least the second pair to turn up in the area in less than a month. The Air Force does not publicize all of its B-1B flights.

On April 29, two Lancers appeared over the South China Sea during a 32-hour round trip from Ellsworth Air Force Base, S.D. That flight demonstrated the new "dynamic force employment model" aimed at making its global bomber presence less predictable, the Air Force said at the time.



RIVER BRUCE/U.S. Air Force

Two B-1B Lancer bombers from Dyess Air Force Base, Texas, head for the South China Sea on Tuesday.

The squadron from Dyess arrived at Guam on May 1 with four B-1B bombers and about 200 airmen to train and conduct operations with allies and partners, the

Air Force said at the time.

Beijing deems such overflights "provocative," and blames the U.S. for rising tensions between the two nations. China and sev-

eral other countries have overlapping claims to portions of the South China Sea.

The U.S. disputes China's claims over several islands and

reefs in the resource-rich South and East China seas, including the Spratly, Paracel and Senkaku islands, according to the CIA World Factbook. The Air Force missions follow an increasing number of freedom-of-navigation operations the Navy conducts in the region to challenge what it calls China's "excessive maritime claims."

China has been active there, as well, sending an aircraft carrier task force twice in April through the Miyako Strait, a strategic waterway near Okinawa.

Since mid-March, Chinese fighter jets have also harassed U.S. reconnaissance aircraft at least nine times in the South China Sea, a Pentagon official told Fox News in a May 19 report.

Reed Werner, deputy assistant secretary of defense for South-East Asia, said that a Chinese vessel escorting a Chinese carrier maneuvered in an "unsafe and unprofessional way" near the guided-missile destroyer USS Mustin last month.

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China may be preparing for 1st dual-carrier drills in South China Sea

BY SETH ROBSON
Stars and Stripes

China may deploy two aircraft carriers for the first time during an exercise in the South China Sea this summer, according to numerous media reports.

The Chinese carriers Liaoning and Shandong have been conducting combat readiness training in the Yellow Sea this month ahead of deployment, the South China Morning Post reported Sunday.

"An aircraft carrier strike group will pass through the Pratas Islands on its way to the exercise site to the southeast of Taiwan in the Philippine Sea," said the report, quoting an anonymous military source.

It's unclear whether both the Liaoning, China's first aircraft carrier, and the Shandong, commissioned at the end of last year, will proceed to the drills, the newspaper reported.

Britain's Daily Mail reported Tuesday that plans to deploy the carriers play into fears of a Taiwan invasion after Chinese Foreign Minister Wang Yi told reporters Sunday that "political forces in the U.S. are taking China-U.S. relations hostage and pushing our two countries to the brink of a new Cold War."

A dual-carrier deployment by China would be "more symbolic than substantive," Paul Buchanan, an American security analyst based in Auckland, New Zealand, said Wednesday, noting that Beijing doesn't have a lot of experience in carrier operations.

"They are posturing quite heavily," he said, adding that such an exercise would show the crew's operational experience.

"I imagine the U.S. will take



Wikimedia Commons

The Chinese aircraft carrier Liaoning is pictured in July 2014.

ing a close look. Of course the Taiwanese will as well. All the countries adjacent with the South China Sea will sit up and take notice, but they will know this is more of a display than anything else."

The drills are a direct challenge

to U.S. supremacy in the South China Sea, Buchanan added.

"The U.S. moves its carriers through there at will, but now it has a serious contender to the throne," he said.

The U.S. Navy still has the largest collection of aircraft carriers

in the world.

On Friday, the Navy pointed out, seven of 11 carriers — the Ronald Reagan, Gerald R. Ford, Abraham Lincoln, Nimitz, Harry S. Truman, Theodore Roosevelt and Dwight D. Eisenhower — were at sea.

Pacific Air Forces tweeted Wednesday that B-1B Lancers from the 9th Expeditionary Bomb Squadron at Dyess Air Force Base, Texas, flew a mission out of Guam over the South China Sea on Tuesday.

That day, plane spotters tweeted flight information showing that two B-1Bs and a refueling aircraft flew past southern Taiwan and close to Hong Kong.

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MILITARY

Ramstein airmen find ways to train amid restrictions

By JENNIFER H. SVAN
Stars and Stripes

RAMSTEIN AIR BASE, Germany — Before the coronavirus upended routines around the world, airmen with the 435th Contingency Response Squadron would use a field near the German city of Worms or a drop zone in France to stay current on parachute jump requirements.

But in the last couple of months, restrictions have meant they've often used Ramstein's airfield for jumps.

"We've done this about four or five times since COVID-19 started," said Air Force Master Sgt. Jim Burke, an airfield manager with the squadron and a senior-rated jumpmaster. "This is a perishable skill."

Parachuting over Ramstein kicked off the Agile Wolf exercise Tuesday, allowing the squadron to practice with other units its core missions of opening air bases and supporting mobility aircraft across Europe and Africa.

Agile Wolf, the third exercise of its kind since December, had to be tweaked because of the pandemic.

Airmen set up generators and pitched tents near the squadron building to simulate a deployed location, but no one spent the night in the makeshift outpost, said Maj. Brad Seehauer, the 435th CRS acting operations officer.

Plans were canceled to bring in contractors from France to "pretend to shoot us so we can pretend to shoot back," Seehauer said.

Instead, the squadrons looked

'(Plans were canceled to bring in contractors from France to) pretend to shoot us so we can pretend to shoot back.'

Maj. Brad Seehauer

to soldiers from Bravo Company, 1st Battalion, 214th Aviation Regiment, who flew a CH-47 Chinook from Katterbach Army Airfield near Neubach to Ramstein.

At Ramstein, airmen practiced loading and rigging the heavy-lift helicopter with equipment they might need at an austere or contested airfield, including an all-terrain combat vehicle and a small motorcycle for patrols, as well as rations and other essential items.

"We have the ability to deploy on a helicopter," Seehauer said. "We just don't get a lot of practice with it."

The exercise, which runs through Thursday, will also allow airmen to practice hot-pit refueling, where F-16 fighter jets from Spangdahlem will land at Ramstein and get fuel without stopping their engines. A team of airmen from the 435th also will drive to Spangdahlem and direct a Ramstein C-130 to land using mobile navigation tools.

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PHOTOS BY JENNIFER H. SVAN/Stars and Stripes

A C-130J Super Hercules assigned to Ramstein Air Base, Germany, drops paratroopers with the 435th Contingency Response Group over Ramstein's drop zone Tuesday as part of the Agile Wolf exercise. The Ramstein-based jumpers have been using the Ramstein drop zone more due to coronavirus-imposed limitations on travel.



Airmen practice loading a combat all-terrain vehicle into the back of an Army CH-47 Chinook helicopter Wednesday.

Report: Annual hearings on racial disparity in military justice system recommended

FROM FRONT PAGE

The investigations prompted Congress in December to order that services track race and ethnicity within the justice system in an effort to root out unfairness.

The latest Protect Our Defenders report said the Air Force has failed to take significant action and that a "racial disparity team" established to deal with the issue was window dressing.

"A three-year effort by POD found that the creation of the disparity team appeared to be an attempt to deflect from the Air Force's abysmal record," the group said.

The Air Force didn't respond to requests for comment Wednesday.

Documents obtained earlier this year after a series of court

findings showed that the Air Force acknowledged a "persistent" and "consistent" racial disparity in military justice, but did nothing about it, the report said.

"We recognize there is still work to do in this area," an Air Force working group said in a talking point slide the service was court-ordered to release, according to the report.

Another slide stated more focus and action on the issue is needed during investigations that "are happening prior to Airmen entering into the Article 15 and Court Martial processes."

"Strenuous review needs to take place to truly measure how different demographics of Airmen are receiving punishments/corrective actions prior to legal infractions occurring," the slide

stated. "One of the most important questions that we must be able to answer in the affirmative is: Are we being equitable and consistent with, and for, all Airmen at all points through these disciplinary processes?"

The slides were undated but the report stated they were made in 2017.

Documents also showed the Air Force working group only met for 90 days, kept few official records, made superficial recommendations and never formally briefed senior leaders, the report said.

"Instead, the service engaged in a multi-year effort to keep the findings and recommendations from the working group hidden," the report said. "It remains to be asked why the Air Force fought so hard to keep the information from

the public, and at what level were those efforts being directed."

The report recommended that Congress hold annual hearings on racial disparity in the military justice system as a means for holding the service branches accountable.

"The military should not be able to keep information from the public simply because it is embarrassing or exposes systemic failures," it said.

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MILITARY

Police refer charges against soldier, civilian in robbery

Pair accused of theft from Okinawa currency exchange shop

BY MATTHEW M. BURKE
AND AYA ICHIHASHI
Stars and Stripes

CAMP FOSTER, Okinawa — Japanese police have identified two people suspected of robbing nearly \$65,000 from a currency exchange shop at Camp Foster earlier this month as the case now heads to prosecutors.

Okinawa Police referred charges Tuesday against Army Pvt. Demetrius Moton Jr., 21, and Hassan Smith, 34, to the Naha District Public Prosecutor's Office, a police spokesman said Wednesday. Both men live and work at Kadena Air Base. Smith is a civilian employee.

Police hope prosecutors accept their recommendations to charge the men with robbery and invasion of a building.

"We gathered enough evidence to believe that those two sus-

pects committed the crime," the spokesman said. "It is now up to the prosecutor's office to decide to indict or not." Some government officials in Japan customarily speak to the media on condition of anonymity.

The referrals are the culmination of a joint U.S.-Japanese effort to apprehend those responsible for the May 12 robbery, the spokesman said. Both men remain in U.S. military custody.

According to police, two mask-wearing perpetrators entered the currency exchange shop, not far from Camp Foster's front gate, at about 4 p.m. One or both went inside the counter area of the shop and one or both brandished a knife, threatening an employee and demanding money.

The pair then ran out with \$64,700 in Japanese and U.S. currency, police have said. No one was injured.

U.S. service members or American base employees were immediately suspected because both men reportedly spoke English and the shop's proximity to the base, police have said.

On May 15, local media photographed a uniformed soldier being escorted into the police station by military police. The 18th Wing at Kadena issued a statement saying a soldier and a civilian employee of the base were suspects.

A spokesman from the Naha District Public Prosecutor's Office said Wednesday that it was just starting its investigation into the charges.

"We cannot comment on when these two suspects will be indicted or not," the spokesman said.

The spokesman declined to say whether they would request custody from the U.S. military.

A conviction of robbery with threat or assault carries between



AYA ICHIHASHI/Stars and Stripes

Okinawa police say this currency exchange shop near Camp Foster was robbed by two English-speaking masked men on May 12.

five to 20 years imprisonment under Japanese criminal law, according to the Ministry of Internal Affairs and Communications.

Officials from the 18th Wing referred all questions about the men and the case Wednesday to Okinawa Police.

"The U.S. military has been cooperating with Okinawa police since the start of this investigation and will continue to cooper-

ate as long as local police request our assistance," 18th Wing officials said in an email to Stars and Stripes on Wednesday. "We take these matters very seriously and will ensure members are held accountable if they are found to be involved in criminal activities."

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USFK worker helps stop apparent suicide attempts

BY KIM GAMEL
Stars and Stripes

SEOUL, South Korea — Andres Torres was out for an early morning bike ride when he spotted two South Korean men perched dangerously on the tall barriers lining the Mapo Bridge in Seoul.

Torres, who works for the Defense Intelligence Agency on Yongsan Garrison, couldn't remember the local emergency number (119) and doesn't speak much Korean but felt he had to do something to keep them from jumping.

"I was just telling them, 'This is not a good idea. You'd have a day outside,'" he said, describing the May 21 incident. "I just rambled, but at least I got their attention for a little bit."

The city installed 8.5-foot-high, curved barriers along the bridge in 2016 to keep people from trying to jump as it had become a popular spot for suicide attempts.



ALEXEY KOMAROV/Wikimedia Commons

Mapo Bridge, which crosses the Han River in Seoul, South Korea, is pictured in 2016. Andrew Torres, who works for the Defense Intelligence Agency on Yongsan Garrison, helped thwart apparent suicide attempts on the bridge.

But the men had managed to climb on top.

Torres, 34, of Mount Pleasant, S.C., said he also showed them a photo of his daughter that he has on his phone as a way of showing them "there's a lot more to live for."

One of the men took notice and climbed down, stumbling and hitting his head, but the second man remained on the fence, he said.

Torres tried to flag down an emergency

vehicle that drove by and waved at the closed-circuit TV cameras on the bridge to try to get somebody's attention.

A rescue dive boat eventually appeared on the Han River below.

"Then finally I noticed that the traffic stopped on the bridge coming my direction, then the fire trucks came out and stopped. They rushed to him and grabbed him. They got him off the top," Torres said.

Torres said one of the firefighters thanked him in English. He snapped a photo of the scene before riding away.

An officer at the Youngdeungpo fire station said rescue crews that responded to a call at 8:45 a.m. May 21 found two South Korean men on the bridge barrier, then turned them over to police. He couldn't provide more details.

The episode took about 15 minutes, Torres said.

"It happened in a blink of an eye, but I felt like I was up there forever," he said. "They could have come down from their own accord. They might not have understood me, but it felt good to try to help someone."

Stars and Stripes reporter Yoo Kyong Chang contributed to this report.
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FBI: Only 1 attacker involved in Texas naval base shooting

Associated Press

HOUSTON — The FBI said Tuesday that its investigation points to only one attacker in the shooting at a Texas naval air base, days after the agency suggested another person involved might be on the loose.

FBI Supervisory Senior Resi-

dent Agent Leah Greeves said last week that investigators were working to determine whether a second person of interest was at large following the shooting at Naval Air Station Corpus Christi. The Thursday attack left a sailor wounded and the gunman dead.

But the agency's Houston office said Tuesday on Twitter that

"while there was initial concern about a potential second person of interest, intense investigation leads us now to believe there was not."

The FBI also repeated that the shooting is being investigated as a "terror-related incident," without elaborating on what that means. Two officials familiar with the

investigation previously told The Associated Press that agents were examining social media posts they believe the shooter made expressing support for extremist groups, including al-Qaida in the Arabian Peninsula.

Officials have identified the gunman as Adam Salim Alaisali, 20, a Corpus Christi resident who

had been a student at a local community college.

Security officers shot and killed him after he opened fire while trying to drive a truck through a base entry gate.

The FBI said Tuesday that Alaisali was a Syria-born American citizen.

VIRUS OUTBREAK

Pentagon easing stop-movement restrictions

By CAITLIN M. KENNEY

Stars and Stripes

WASHINGTON — The Defense Department announced its stop-movement order will remain in place but some bases could soon meet new guidelines that will allow travel for military personnel and their families.

A memorandum by Defense Secretary Mark Esper dated May 22 states he has canceled the prior travel guidance that went into effect April 20 and was expected to end June 30. He extended the travel restrictions for all government travel of personnel and their families indefinitely unless locations meet specific criteria to allow travel to resume.

"While the [coronavirus pandemic] still presents risk to DoD service members, civilians, and their families, improving conditions warrant a transition in our approach to domestic and overseas personnel travel to a conditions-based, phased approach to personnel movement and travel," the memo states.

The memo was released along with two others on guidelines for reopening the Pentagon and health guidance for personnel who are deploying.

Esper's memo states regional criteria laid out by a White House directive and installation-level criteria based on local conditions need to be met in order to bring back unrestricted travel to states, territories and other countries.

Matthew Donovan, the under-secretary of defense for personnel and readiness, said Tuesday that he expected some states and locations to be considered "green" — or meet the memo's criteria — as soon as Tuesday evening.

The White House's Opening Up America Again guidelines require removal of local shelter-in-place orders, a 14-day downward trajectory in virus symptoms and a 14-day downward trajectory in new cases or positive tests. Data and guidance from the Department of Health and Human Services and the Centers for Disease

Some US bases take first steps to return to normal

Associated Press

WASHINGTON — Some military bases will be able to begin bringing back some workers and take the first major step toward a return to normal operations this week, the Pentagon said Tuesday.

The announcement came as the Pentagon laid out detailed plans that will govern how the department and its forces around the world will gradually and systematically begin to lift restrictions put in place by the global coronavirus pandemic. Defense officials did not say how many bases or where they were, but said the locations would be made public.

Speaking to Pentagon reporters, Matthew Donovan, the department's under-secretary for personnel, said that some locations will be able to "go green immediately" based on the conditions in their region and a downward trend in virus cases or positive COVID-19 tests that has lasted for two weeks. He said the locations would be on a list that will be released, and would conform with Centers for Disease Control and Prevention assessments of regions where the virus was declining.

Until now, all Defense Department installations have been at "phase zero" which requires that at least 80% of the workforce be teleworking, and mandates social distancing, masks and other health precautions.

Under the plans released Tuesday, there are four more phases. Each one calls for a two-week decline in virus cases and other conditions at the base and the surrounding community in order to move to the next phase.

According to Donovan, the bases who could "go green" and move from phase zero to phase one as of Tuesday night will have met a number of conditions for both the in-



SARAH D. SANGSTER/U.S. Army

25th Combat Aviation Brigade, 25th Infantry Division, soldiers focus on the new Army Combat Fitness Test requirements at Wheeler Army Airfield, Hawaii. Some military bases are taking steps to return to normal operations.

stitution and its surrounding region. Those conditions include the two-week downward trend of virus cases, adequate availability of health care, testing, day care, personal protective equipment and accessible transit.

Those facilities could begin to decrease the number of people teleworking to 60% and start having gatherings of up to 10 people, as long as there is continued social distancing.

At phase two, gyms and some expanded food court choices could open, with social distancing, and as little as 20% of the workforce could be teleworking. And if all goes well for another two weeks, bases would

move to phase three, which allows workers to return to their offices, with exceptions allowed for individuals.

The Pentagon, for example, has currently seen a downward trend in virus cases for eight days. But any move to the next phase would be contingent on a similar decline in the region, along with removal of local and state stay-at-home orders currently in place, and the availability of day care, transit and other health services.

The decisions are made by the military service secretaries and combatant commanders around the world.

Control and Prevention will be used as well to assess the local conditions.

Installations will be assessed by the services, which will report whether they meet four factors: removal of local travel restrictions; availability of essential services such as schools and child care; quality control and assur-

ances for packing and moving household goods, and the capacity and capability to treat and test personnel.

Once areas and installations meet the memo's criteria, they will be considered for permissions to travel to and from the area. Donovan's office will pub-

lish locations that have resumed travel, according to the memo. He said during a news briefing at the Pentagon that the information will be published publicly, not just internally to the Defense Department.

There are still exemptions to the travel restrictions as with the

previous travel guidance, including allowing new recruits to attend basic training and waivers for service members to move for reasons, including mission essential operations, according to the memo.

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Ill. reservist is third US service member to die of coronavirus

By COREY DICKSTEIN

Stars and Stripes

WASHINGTON — A 34-year-old Army reservist from Illinois died Friday from coronavirus complications, becoming the third service member to succumb to the illness that has sickened more than 6,000 U.S. troops, service officials said Wednesday.

Sgt. Simon Zamudio died at a suburban Chicago hospital after contracting the virus, according to Army officials and an obituary announcing his death. He had served in the Army Reserve since October 2015 and he had been promoted to sergeant in April, said Lt. Col. Simon Flake, a spokesman for the Army Reserve.



He was not on active-duty orders as part of the military's response to the coronavirus pandemic when he contracted the illness, defense officials said

Tuesday.

Zamudio was assigned to the 371st Theater Movement Control Element at Fort Sheridan, Ill., Flake said. Defense officials on Tuesday incorrectly said he had been assigned to a unit based in Wisconsin.

Zamudio was born in Phoe-

nix and lived in Carpentersville, Ill. He is survived by his wife and a daughter, according to his obituary.

His death is the second among Army soldiers and the first U.S. service member death from the virus since April 13, when Navy Chief Petty Officer Robert Thacker Jr. died of complications of the virus at U.S. Naval Hospital Guam. The 41-year-old sailor was among more than 1,000 crew members to contract the disease aboard the aircraft carrier USS Theodore Roosevelt, by far the military's worst coronavirus outbreak.

Army Capt. Douglas Linn Hickock, a member of the New Jersey National Guard, died March 28. Hickock, 57, a physician's assistant, was preparing to

activate as part of the pandemic response just before he was hospitalized with the virus and died one week later.

The Pentagon said Wednesday that 6,168 service members

had tested positive for the virus. Among them, 168 had spent some time in the hospital and 3,474 had recovered.

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VIRUS OUTBREAK

Basic training to continue at Keesler AFB

By ROSE L. THAYER
Stars and Stripes

AUSTIN, Texas — The Air Force will begin sending 60 recruits each week to basic training at Keesler Air Force Base in Mississippi starting next week to allow more physical distance between recruits and prepare other training infrastructure to operate under the threat of the coronavirus for the next year.

The decision to use the base in Biloxi followed a trial run, which began April 7, and exposed some of the challenges to hosting basic training outside of Lackland Air Force Base in San Antonio. Recruits will arrive weekly through the fiscal year, which ends Sept. 30, said Maj. Gen. Andrea Tullus, commander of the 2nd Air Force, which is in charge of all service training.

Basic training at Keesler includes using facilities located at nearby Camp Shelby, a Mississippi National Guard base in Hattiesburg.

The Air Force reduced the weekly number of recruits going to Lackland from up to 800 to 460 in March after a weeklong pause to clean facilities and implement physical distancing protocols. As Keesler begins to take recruits in June, Lackland will increase its level of recruits to about 640, with a goal of bringing in 9,400 new airmen by the end of September, Tullus said Tuesday on a phone call with reporters.

"I would not recommend that we do this on a permanent basis," she said about the Keesler training. "I would like to think that we would not do this for an extended period of time even during [coronavirus] conditions."

Tullus was not concerned with the training recruits receive, but rather the strain of providing the supplemental support — such as administrative, medical and logistics personnel — required to host basic training for recruits. At its capacity, Keesler can take



KEMBERLY GROUVE/U.S. Air Force

U.S. Air Force Airman Basic Aeries Blair, under the 37th Training Wing, 737th Training Group Detachment 5, Keesler Air Force Base, Miss., participates in training at Camp Shelby Joint Forces Training Center, Miss., on May 1. The decision to use the base followed a trial run which began April 7.

on 360 recruits at a time.

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June, Lackland will increase its level of recruits to about 640, with a goal of bringing in 9,400 new airmen by the end of September,

Tullus said Tuesday on a phone call with reporters.

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501st Medical Company soldiers quarantine on return to Ky. post

Associated Press

FORT CAMPBELL, Ky. — Dozens of soldiers based at Fort Campbell have returned after being deployed in the Northeast to support coronavirus relief

efforts.

About 40 soldiers assigned to the 501st Medical Company returned Saturday to the Army post on the Kentucky-Tennessee line, Fort Campbell said in a statement. They deployed on April 18

to provide medical treatment, behavioral health care, COVID-19 screening and laboratory testing to Defense Department service members in New York, New Jersey, Massachusetts, Connecticut and Pennsylvania.

"We are extremely proud of our Soldiers and the historic medical response they provided to a region vandalized by a global pandemic," said Capt. Mike Hart, commander of the 501st Medical Company.

Upon returning, the service members began quarantining as a safety precaution. As soon as their quarantine is complete, the post plans an official welcome home ceremony.

Iran's newly elected parliament convenes despite pandemic

Associated Press

TEHRAN, Iran — Iran's newly elected parliament convened on Wednesday, dominated by conservative lawmakers and under strict social distancing regulations, as the country struggles to curb the spread of the coronavirus that has hit the nation hard.

Iranian state TV said all 268 lawmakers who were in attendance had tested negative for the virus. The lawmakers were sworn in after many of them arrived for the opening ceremony wearing face masks and observing social distancing regulations. Temperatures were taken before they en-

tered the parliament building. However, images from the meeting showed that many did not wear masks and did not observe social distancing during proceedings.

Iran is grappling with the deadliest outbreak in the Middle East, with more than 7,500 fatalities out of over 141,500 confirmed

cases. Turkey has the region's largest outbreak, with 158,700 confirmed cases and more than 4,390 deaths.

At Wednesday's opening session, Iranian lawmakers chose a temporary speaker, based on age seniority, and listened to a message from Supreme Leader Ayatollah Ali Khamenei, read by an

aid. President Hassan Rouhani addressed the lawmakers, urging them to cooperate with his administration so that together Iranians can better "confront sanctions and the disease" in this "very difficult year."

The lawmakers were to elect a permanent parliament speaker on Thursday, for a one-year term.

VIRUS OUTBREAK

Congress circles back to small-business aid

Associated Press

WASHINGTON — Deadlocked over the next big coronavirus relief bill, Congress is shifting its attention to a more modest overhaul of small-business aid in hopes of helping employers reopen shops and survive the pandemic.

Bipartisan legislation that would give small employers more time to take advantage of federal subsidies for payroll and other costs is expected to pass the House this week, as lawmakers return to Washington for an abbreviated two-day session.

Yet absent from the agenda is formal talks between congressional leaders on the next phase of the federal coronavirus response. Democrats have already pushed a \$3 trillion-plus measure through the House, but negotiations with the GOP-controlled Senate and White House have yet to begin.

"We can't keep popping up the economy forever," Senate Majority Leader Mitch McConnell said Tuesday in Lexington, Ky. It was one of his first public appearances in his home state since mid-March.

"The ultimate solution is to begin to get back to normal," he

said. "There are three things that are essential to have full normalcy — testing, treatment and vaccine."

Senate Republicans are divided on the next steps and wary of another sprawling negotiation where Democrats and the White House call the shots. They are also split on a central element: how much aid to provide state and local governments and other coronavirus response after earlier relief bills totaled almost \$3 trillion.

Even as they hit "pause" on a larger bill, Republicans are enthusiastic about improving the Paycheck Protection Program, which was established in March under the \$2 trillion coronavirus relief bill and was replenished last month. All told, Congress had provided about \$660 billion for the program.

Sen. Marco Rubio, R-Fla., a key architect of the aid, said in an interview that the program has shifted from one that was intended to keep paychecks flowing during the shutdown to a bridge to help businesses pay workers as they reopen — in many cases, at less than full capacity.

"It's taken on a different level of importance now," Rubio said.

"The program has evolved from simply keeping people from getting unemployed to actually helping rehire people as these businesses open up but the cash flow lags."

The House bill would provide a 24-week window to spend PPP funds and would eliminate a requirement that 75% of the forgivable loans be used for payroll costs. The goal is to give businesses more flexibility to pay rent and other overhead costs such as installing protective equipment.

Under the original program, businesses are required to spend their loan money within the eight-week window or have their loans forgiven. That deadline is fast approaching. Without forgiveness, they would face a debt burden that, for many, would be hard to bear in a struggling economy.

But the eight-week window has created a problem, particularly for restaurants. Under the law, they were required to rehire all their laid-off workers despite being closed or limited to takeout and delivery. Many restaurant owners feared that they would use up their loan money before being allowed to reopen, or reopening with reduced revenue because of

social distancing requirements.

The House's return to Washington for voting Wednesday comes after Senate Republicans — who are on recess after spending the past three weeks in Washington — have been knocking the decision by top Democrats to largely stay out of session during the furloughs.

House GOP leader Kevin McCarthy's office announced it was filing a lawsuit Tuesday against the new system of proxy voting. Approved by House Democrats earlier this month, the first-of-its-kind rules change will be in practice this week as dozens of lawmakers sign up to have another voter on their behalf so they can avoid travel to Washington. Republicans call it unconstitutional.

House Speaker Nancy Pelosi called the lawsuit a "sad stunt" as the nation's virus-related death toll approaches 100,000.

It appears the House could be out of session for much of June as well.

The House, which has more than four times as many members as the 100-person Senate, is operating under the Capitol physician's guidance, as Washington, D.C., remains under stay-home orders.

Majority Leader Steny Hoyer, D-Md., said there isn't much legislation ready for floor votes, and committees are just beginning to write must-pass legislation like agency budget bills, the annual defense policy measure and a major reauthorization of water projects.

In the meantime, Democrats are focused on touting the more than \$3 trillion measure that they passed earlier this month.

Republicans and the White House have dismissed the bill as a liberal wish list, but they have yet to coalesce around an alternative despite acknowledging the need for more legislative action.

One idea gaining steam among Republicans — pushed by Rep. Kevin Brady, of Texas, and Sen. Rob Portman, of Ohio — would deliver a bonus to unemployed people who return to their jobs. It's discussed as a replacement for the \$600 per week supplemental unemployment benefit that expires July 31.

"It's something we're looking at very carefully," said White House economic adviser Larry Kudlow. He called the jobless aid "a major disincentive to go back to work."

Some have gone shopping mad during the pandemic

BY LEANNE ITALIE
Associated Press

NEW YORK — Between technical glitches and food worries, retail therapy and sheer amnesia, something has happened to shopping during the pandemic that can be summed up thusly: rubber chickens.

Melissa Jean Footlick bought some while sheltering at home in San Diego with her husband and three dogs. She's a kidney transplant patient so she's been taking extra care. She's among millions who have helped online retail sales surge as consumer spending fell off rapidly when businesses shut down.

"I spent two hours trying to find a Funfetti cake mix and frosting. No reason, I just wanted it. I also got a game where you throw rubber chickens at a target. I misread the description and thought it was like badminton with rubber chickens," she explained.

Said husband and dogs have yet to agree to a game.

For others, shopping madness has been about the essentials, only super-sized: 10-pound bags of rice; 25-pound sacks of flour; 50 pounds worth of rubber; pickles and pancake mix for a crowd.

For some, it's impulse shoe purchases, with nowhere to go. And mistaken multiple pounds of blueberries when a single container was the goal.

Remember the toilet paper scare? George Pav found some in an unlikely place in Berlin.

"When the mayor of Berlin announced the lockdown, I knew



MELISSA JEAN FOOTLICK/AP

Melissa Jean Footlick, 42, of San Diego, holds rubber chickens from a game she purchased online. She is among millions who have helped online retail sales surge after many businesses shut down.

that I wouldn't have the chance to drink a cup of coffee from a cafe for quite some time. My first thought was to find a cafe and enjoy an espresso. Alas, most of them were already shut," he recalled.

He ventured into one, but a woman there said they were closed.

"No coffee. Then I looked behind her. There was a pile of toilet

paper. She said she was selling them for 50 cents per piece," Pav said.

He bought four squares.

For Beth Wilson of New York, it was a bistro table and chairs to match the ones at a Paris cafe where she and her husband "ate every morning for breakfast on our honeymoon." The chairs, she said, look great, "but the table came broken."

The panic buying, the over-buying, the emotional buying aren't unique to this extraordinary world-shaking event, but it's the kind of world-shaking event that sent the world home with plenty of anxiety and few shopping options other than the online kind.

In the U.S., retail sales tumbled by a record 16.4% from March to April as business shutdowns caused by the coronavirus kept shoppers away, threatened stores and weighed down a tanking economy. The Commerce Department reported that a long-standing migration toward online purchases accelerated, posting an 8.4% monthly gain.

Measured year over year, online sales surged 21.6%.

"It's panic on lots of levels," said Wendy Liebmann, CEO of WSL Strategic Retail, a global consulting firm specializing in retail strategy and shopper insights. "All of the traditional buying patterns are tossed up in the air."

She called it "shopping chaos" with no anchors. And the chaos has come with some unique calculus.

One couple got to skip their last

preschool payment due to lockdown and purchased the couch of their dreams. Christine Alonzo Carlisle, 45, was awash in refunds in Carmel, Ind., where she's sheltering with her husband and two teenage daughters.

"My big family spring break trip, that I'd spent a year planning, was canceled and refunded. All of my kids' summer camps were refunded. Club sports were refunded. Random refunds were just popping up like crazy on my credit card account," she said.

"Then, I got an email that the super fancy European coffee machine I'd been dreaming of was on sale. Still ridiculous, but a pretty good sale. So I bought it. I had a moment of buyer's regret, and then I had a perfectly brewed cappuccino, or 10, and instantly felt better," Carlisle added.

That "instant" feeling is key to much of the coronavirus shopping, said Jeff Galak, associate professor of marketing at Carnegie Mellon University's Tepper School of Business.

"Shopping as therapy has been shown to reduce negative moods and boost overall happiness," he said. "The big downside, however, is that such relief is very short-lived."

Galak said some research points to "shopping while bored" as a variation with less emotional payout.

"Browsing for things that one doesn't need fills the time and then clicking 'buy now' just naturally follows," he said.

VIRUS OUTBREAK

South Korea's spike in cases illustrates perils of reopening

Associated Press

SEOUL, South Korea — As Mediterranean beaches and Las Vegas casinos laid out plans to welcome tourists again, South Korea announced a spike in new infections Wednesday and considered reimposing social distancing restrictions, revealing the setbacks ahead for other nations on the road to reopening.

The European Union, meanwhile, unveiled a huge stimulus package for the bloc's ailing economies, as European nations scrambled to emulate South Korea's widely praised strategy of tracing, testing and treating coronavirus victims, which tamed its outbreak and made it a model for the world.

The EU's economics commissioner, Paolo Gentiloni, called the \$825 billion recovery fund "a European turning point to face an unprecedented crisis."

The EU move came as the International Labor Organization reported nearly one in six young people have stopped working during the pandemic, warning of long-term fallout that could lead to a "lockdown generation" if steps aren't taken to ease the crisis. The U.N. labor agency said the equivalent of 305 million full-time jobs have been lost due to COVID-19 — with the impact most sharply being felt now in the Americas.

Across the Atlantic, the pandemic claimed new victims as the confirmed U.S. death toll approached 100,000 — the highest by far in the world — and nations from Mexico to Chile to Brazil struggled with surging cases and overwhelmed hospitals.

By the numbers

40

New cases of coronavirus Wednesday in South Korea, that country's largest jump in nearly 50 days.

21.97

Coronavirus incidence rate per 100,000 people in South Korea.

5.6M

How many people worldwide have been infected with COVID-19.

SOURCE: Johns Hopkins University statistics

In South Korea, 40 newly confirmed cases — the biggest daily jump in nearly 50 days — raised alarms as millions of children returned to school Wednesday.

All but four of the new cases were in the densely populated Seoul region, where officials are scrambling to stop transmissions linked to nightclubs, karaoke rooms and a massive e-commerce



ANN YOUNG-JOON/AP

People wearing face masks arrive at the domestic flight terminal of Gimpo airport in Seoul, South Korea, Wednesday, the first day authorities required all passengers to wear masks amid the pandemic.

warehouse. All were reopened last month when social distancing measures were relaxed.

The country's top infectious disease expert said South Korea may need to reimpose social distancing restrictions because it's becoming increasingly difficult for health workers to track the spread of COVID-19 amid warmer weather and eased attitudes on distancing.

"We will do our best to trace contacts and implement preventive measures, but there's a limit to such efforts," said Jeong Eun-kyeong, director of South Korea's Centers for Disease Control and Prevention.

"Young people have a very broad range of activity, so at the point of diagnosis, there's already a lot of exposure. ... The number of people or locations we have to trace are increasing geometrically," he added.

Seoul and nearby cities in recent weeks have re-closed thousands of bars, karaoke rooms and other entertainment venues to slow the spread of the virus.

Britain, which has recorded more deaths than any other European country — more than 37,000 — announced the details of its own

"test and trace" plans to send out 25,000 workers to find contacts of those who test positive. Germany said it would extend pandemic-related restrictions on personal contacts until June 29.

As many countries in Asia and Europe make progress in containing the pandemic, reversing its devastating economic fallout becomes a top priority.

Even as the 27-nation EU unveiled its recovery plan, the bloc remained deeply divided over what strings should be attached to the funds, with frugal members such as Austria, Denmark, the Netherlands and Sweden pushing for loans rather than grants.

India saw another record single-day jump, reporting 6,387 new cases on Wednesday as the government prepared new guidelines for the next phase of a 2-month-old national lockdown that ends Sunday.

Mexico's health department reported 501 deaths from the coronavirus — a new one-day high.

A U.S. travel ban took effect for foreigners coming from Brazil, where President Jair Bolsonaro has raged against state and local leaders who are enforcing stay-at-home measures. Brazil has

about 375,000 coronavirus infections — second only to the 1.6 million cases in the U.S. — and has counted over 23,000 deaths.

Worldwide, the virus has infected nearly 5.6 million people and killed more than 350,000, including about 170,000 in Europe, according to a tally by Johns Hopkins University of government reports.

Flags were flying at half-mast Wednesday on more than 14,000 public buildings as Spain held the first of 10 days of national mourning for coronavirus victims.

Around the globe, eagerness to get back to normal is being offset by nervousness about what might come next.

Greece, which has seen only 173 coronavirus deaths, will let international tourists return to its islands beginning June 15. While many residents depend on tourism for their livelihoods, they have also taken comfort in their isolation during the pandemic and worry about opening up to outsiders.

"So far things have gone well," said Katerina Vikelis on the island of Milos. "Now with the people who will come, what will happen?"

Job losses among young risks creating 'lock-down generation'

Associated Press

GENEVA — More than one in every six young workers have stopped working during the coronavirus pandemic, the U.N. labor agency reported Wednesday, warning of long-term fallout that could lead to a "lock-down generation" if steps aren't taken to ease the crisis.

The International Labor Organization, in its fourth edition of its report on the impact of the pandemic on jobs, says that work hours equivalent to 305 million full-time jobs have been lost due to the COVID-19 crisis, with it being felt most sharply now in the Americas, an epicenter of the outbreak currently.

ILO Director-General Guy Ryder warned of the "danger" that young workers aged 15 to 28 in particular could face, from inability to get proper training or gain access to jobs that could extend well beyond the pandemic and last far into their working careers.

'There is a danger of long-term exclusion. The scarring of young people who are excluded from the labor market early in their careers is well attested by the literature.'

Guy Ryder

International Labor Organization director

"They have been basically ejected from their jobs," he said, referring to the one in six youths who have stopped working. "There is a danger of long-term exclusion. The scarring of young people who are excluded from the labor market early in their careers is well attested by the literature."

"So I don't think it is giving way to hyperbole to talk about the danger of a lock-down generation," Ryder added.

Of those still working, nearly one in four — or 23% — have seen their working hours reduced, the ILO said, pointing to a "triple shock" faced by young workers: Destruction of their work, disruption to their training and education, and obstacles moving in the work force or entering it in the first place.

"We run the risk of creating a situation — in this sort of snapshot of pandemic — which will have lasting effects," Ryder told a virtual news conference from the ILO headquarters. "A lot of young people are simply going to be left behind in big numbers."

"And the danger is — and again, this is the lesson of past experience — that this initial shock to young people will last a decade or longer than a decade," Ryder said. "It will affect the trajectory of working people, young working people, throughout

their working lives."

The ILO said policymakers can take steps to ease the fallout, such as by providing "guarantees" to protect employment and skills, and rolling out COVID-19 "testing and tracing" measures that can help improve workplace safety and get people back to work faster and more safely.

The report is based on a survey that the ILO and its partners conducted on youth employment. The agency says young people were already in a precarious position relative to other age categories, with work rates still below those before the 2008 economic crisis.

Of the 178 million young workers employed around the world, more than 40% were in "hard-hat" sectors when the crisis began, such as food services and hospitality industries, the ILO said. More than three-fourths of young workers are in "informal" jobs — including 94% of young workers in Africa alone.

VIRUS OUTBREAK ROUNDUP

Los Angeles County stores, houses of worship can reopen

Associated Press

LOS ANGELES — California moved to further relax its coronavirus restrictions and help the battered economy on Tuesday by permitting barbershops and hair salons to reopen, while Los Angeles County, moving more cautiously, said that stores and houses of worship can open their doors.

The state's most populous county — and the hardest-hit by the coronavirus — moved to permit in-person shopping and religious services with social distancing restrictions, a day after California announced that counties wouldn't need state permission to do so if certain requirements were met.

Retail stores — including those at shopping malls — can open at 50% capacity. Churches, mosques, synagogues and temples can have no more than 25% of building capacity or 100 people. Everyone will be urged to wear masks and practice social distancing.

The decision was a surprise because only about July 4 as a target date for such a reopening. But most of California's 58 counties have already reopened stores, placing L.A. County at an economic disadvantage by limiting its businesses to curbside pickups and deliveries.

Arkansas

LITTLE ROCK — Arkansas' top health official said Tuesday that he will step down this summer, but he has no disagreement with the governor's response to the coronavirus pandemic, even as new cases continued to rise.

Gov. Asa Hutchinson said that Dr. Nathaniel Smith, the state's health secretary, is leaving Aug. 28 for a job with the U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. Hutchinson said that Dr. Jose Romero, the department's chief medical officer, will be the health department's interim head.

Smith's decision comes days after Hutchinson said that the state was seeing a "second peak" of coronavirus cases. The state last week reported a new one-day high of new virus cases. The number of active virus cases — excluding those who have recovered or died — has steadily increased since setting a new high on Friday.

Washington, D.C.

The White House said Tuesday that President Donald Trump remains committed holding a Fourth of July celebration in the nation's capital even as Democratic lawmakers from the region — one of the hardest hit by the coronavirus — warn that the area

will not be ready to hold a major event.

White House spokesman Judd Deere reiterated that Trump wants to hold an Independence Day celebration after members of Congress wrote on Tuesday to Defense Secretary Mark Esper and Interior Secretary David Bernhardt to raise their concerns about the safety of such an event.

In their letter, the D.C.-area members wrote that "such an event would needlessly risk the health and safety of thousands of Americans." The letter was organized by Rep. Don Beyer, D-Va., and signed by 10 other congressional Democrats with constituencies in the District of Columbia, Virginia and Maryland.

D.C. mayor Muriel Bowser said Tuesday that the city won't be issuing any permits for large gatherings in the immediate future. The capital is still under a stay-at-home order, with plans to shift to Phase One of its reopening this upcoming weekend.

Florida

TALLAHASSEE — The state of Florida might have lost nearly \$900 million in tax revenues in April — far more than state officials anticipated — as the coronavirus pandemic siphoned away tourist dollars and other revenues from the state's coffers, according to estimates released Tuesday.

The state Legislature has yet to forward the \$93.2 billion budget it approved in March to Gov. Ron DeSantis for his signature. Lawmakers approved the budget just days after the governor began shuttering some businesses and putting stay-at-home measures in place.

The budget that lawmakers approved included \$300 million in extra reserves to help address the economic hardship wrought by the outbreak. The budget also includes \$25.2 million requested by the governor to directly combat the virus, and \$27 million in emergency funds from the federal government.

Kansas

TOPEKA — Kansas' Democratic governor on Tuesday vetoed a sweeping Republican coronavirus measure that would have limited her power to direct the state's pandemic response, but then ceded to local officials the authority to keep restrictions on businesses.

Gov. Laura Kelly not only killed a bill approved by the GOP-controlled Legislature last week, but also issued a new state-of-emergency declaration to replace one set to expire Tuesday night. Many Republicans have ques-



Ramon Rodriguez and Bianney Rodriguez exchange vows during their marriage service in the parking lot of the Honda Center in Anaheim, Calif., on Tuesday.

tioned whether she has the legal authority to do that — and retain the governor's broad emergency powers — so her action is likely to keep an intense partisan dispute burning and risk a potential court challenge.

Kelly is also heightening the political conflict with GOP leaders by calling the Legislature back into special session June 3 to extend the new state of emergency past June 10. Republicans have a long list of proposals, however, including shielding businesses and health care providers from possible coronavirus-related lawsuits.

Lawmakers ended their 2020 session in a single, frenzied 24-hour stretch after reconvening Thursday from a coronavirus-mandated spring break that started March 20. Kelly called the process of pushing through the coronavirus bill "messy, confusing and complicated."

Kentucky

FRANKFORT — Vowing not to back down after armed protesters gathered near his home and hung him in effigy, the governor of Kentucky on Tuesday condemned their use of "fear and terror" in a demonstration fueled by coronavirus restrictions.

Gov. Andy Beshear referred to the protesters as a mob in sharply condemning the weekend rally that spread to the Governor's Mansion, where his children play. And the Democratic governor bluntly accused some Kentucky politicians of culpability for attending a previous rally.

Beshear said that he would not be deterred by the demonstration. He has stressed the need to reopen the state safely, phasing in business restarts amid the health crisis. Nonessential retail stores and restaurant dining rooms have been among the reopenings, though with restrictions meant to adhere to social distancing. Beshear has also strongly urged the wearing of masks.

The effigy was hung in a tree near the State Capitol during what was billed as a protest rally.

when they will have been closed for more than 11 weeks to prevent crowds from gathering and spreading the coronavirus. Nevada Gov. Steve Sisolak announced Tuesday night.

Nevada gambling regulators

said earlier that day that they

may require the state's shuttered

casinos to test all front-line re-

sort workers for COVID-19, plan

to isolate infected visitors and

make other steps to slow the coro-

navirus spread before they can

reopen.

In a statement Tuesday night,

Sisolak said that he would allow

casinos to reopen June 4 and per-

son religious services of up to

50 people starting Friday.

By allowing the casinos to re-

open, with new rules on social

distancing and sanitizing, Siso-

lak said that Nevada would again

welcome visitors but would also

be prepared to close down again

if there is a spike in cases.

New York

NEW YORK — After weeks of declining deaths and hospitalizations, Gov. Andrew Cuomo said that it was time to focus on re-launching New York City's moribund economy.

The Democratic governor laid out a plan that included accelerating major infrastructure projects and tackling transmission of the virus in the hardest-hit neighborhoods after ringing open the Stock Exchange.

On Tuesday, the mid-Hudson Valley, including the city's northern suburbs, became the first region of New York state to begin slowly phasing in economic activity. Long Island was expected to follow Wednesday, which would leave New York City as the only region awaiting the start of reopening.

Cuomo said that the state will direct outbreak-fighting resources to 10 city ZIP codes that account for many of the new hospitalizations. Those cases are coming from mostly lower-income and predominantly minority neighborhoods, he said.

NATION

Swift firings for Minn. officers in man's death

Associated Press

MINNEAPOLIS — To the general public, the video of a white police officer pressing his knee into the neck of a black man prone on the street, crying out for help until he finally stopped moving, was horrifying.

Four officers were fired a day after George Floyd's death, a stunning and swift move by the Minneapolis chief with the mayor's full backing. But despite their dismissal, whether the incident will be considered criminal, or even excessive force, is a more complicated question that will likely take months to investigate.

The officers were dismissed soon after a bystander's video taken outside a south Minneapolis grocery store Monday showed an officer kneeling on the handcuffed man's neck, even after he pleaded that he could not breathe and stopped moving. Floyd's death prompted protests Tuesday, with thousands gathering at the intersection where he died.

Many protesters marched 2 miles to the police precinct station in that part of the city, with some damaging the building's windows and squad cars and spraying graffiti. Police in riot gear eventually confronted them with tear gas and projectiles, with tense skirmishes stretching late into the evening.

Bridgett Floyd told NBC's "Today" show in an interview Wednesday that the officers involved in her brother's death should be charged with murder because "that's exactly what they did." She said she hadn't watched the bystander's video, but told ABC's "Good Morning America" that "I don't understand how someone could possibly let an individual go out like that."

Mayor Jacob Frey announced the firings on Twitter, saying: "This is the right call."

The FBI and state law enforcement were investigating Floyd's death, which immediately drew comparisons to the case of Eric Garner, an unarmed black man who died in 2014 in New York after he was placed in a chokehold by police and pleaded for his life, saying he could not breathe.

But in the Garner case, local prosecutors, the NYPD's internal affairs unit, and the Justice Department all finished investigations into the case before the officer was ultimately fired. Garner's family and activists spent years begging for the officer to be removed. The officers in the Minneapolis incident haven't even been publicly identified, though one defense attorney has confirmed he is representing Derek Chauvin, the officer seen with his knee on Floyd's neck. The attorney



RICHARD TSONG-TAATARII, (MINNEAPOLIS) STAR TRIBUNE/AP

Protesters and police face each other during a rally for George Floyd in Minneapolis on Tuesday. Four officers involved in the arrest of Floyd, a black man who died in custody, were fired Tuesday, after a video showed an officer kneeling on the handcuffed man's neck, even after he stopped moving.

ney, Tom Kelly, declined to comment further.

Police Chief Medaria Arradondo said the department would conduct a full internal investigation, and prosecutors will decide whether to file criminal charges

against the officers involved. The Hennepin County Attorney's Office said it was "shocked and saddened" by the video and pledged to handle the case fairly. Part of that investigation will likely focus on the intent of the officers,

whether they meant to harm Floyd or whether it was a death that happened in the course of police work. The FBI was investigating whether the officers willfully deprived Floyd of his civil rights.

US closes stock-trade probes into 3 senators, but not Burr

Associated Press

WASHINGTON — The Justice Department has closed investigations into stock trading by Sens. Dianne Feinstein, of California; Kelly Loeffler, of Georgia; and Jim Inhofe, of Oklahoma, according to people familiar with notifications sent to the senators. The senators came under scrutiny for transactions made in the weeks before the coronavirus sent markets downhill.

The developments indicate that federal law enforcement officials are narrowing their focus in the stock investigation to Sen. Richard Burr, R-N.C., the former Senate Intelligence Committee chairman. Agents showed up at his Washington-area home about two weeks ago with a warrant to

search his cellphone.

Senate records show that Burr and his wife sold between roughly \$600,000 and \$1.7 million in more than 30 transactions in late January and mid-February, just before the market began to dive and government health officials began to sound alarms about the virus. Burr has denied any wrongdoing.

Loeffler, Inhofe and Feinstein were notified Tuesday that they are no longer under investigation, according to three people familiar with the contacts but not authorized to speak about them.

Loeffler, a Republican who became a senator in January and is in a competitive reelection race, and her husband dumped substantial portions of their portfolio and purchased new stocks around the time Congress was re-

ceiving briefings on the seriousness of the pandemic. Loeffler's husband, Jeffrey Sprecher, is chairman of the New York Stock Exchange, and she has said the accounts were managed by third-party advisers.

Feinstein, a Democrat, reported that her husband sold off between \$1.5 million and \$6 million worth of stock in Allogene Therapeutics before the market drop. The San Francisco-based biotech company researches and develops cures for cancer. Inhofe, a Republican, sold anywhere between roughly \$395,000 and \$850,000 worth of stock he held in late January and early February, according to a disclosure.

Like Loeffler, both Inhofe and Feinstein denied any wrongdoing or involvement in the trades.

Tropical Storm Bertha forms, hits SC coast

Associated Press

which floods dozens of times a year, saw worse problems from an unnamed storm that dumped heavy rain last week.

Along America Street in Charleston, residents awoke Wednesday to an intersection that had become a water-filled canal. Cars parked on the curb had water up to their doors, The Post and Courier reported.

Bertha was expected to move rapidly inland, spreading up to 4 inches of rain through eastern South Carolina into North Carolina and Virginia.

Earlier this month, Tropical Storm Arthur brought rain to North Carolina before moving out to sea. It was the sixth straight year that a named storm has developed before June 1, the official start of the Atlantic hurricane season.



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STARS AND STRIPES

NATION

Trump warns social media after Twitter fact checks

By ZEKE MILLER
Associated Press

WASHINGTON — President Donald Trump on Wednesday threatened social media companies with new regulation or even shutting a day after Twitter added fact checks to two of his tweets.

The president can't unilaterally regulate or close the companies, which would require action by Congress or the Federal Communications Commission. But that didn't stop Trump from angrily issuing a strong warning.

Claiming tech giants "silence conservative voices," Trump tweeted, "We will strongly regulate, or close them down, before we can ever allow this to happen."

And he repeated his unsubstantiated



Trump

ed claim — which sparked his latest showdown with Silicon Valley — that expanding mail-in voting "would be a free for all on cheating, forgery and the theft of Ballots."

Trump and his campaign angrily lashed out Tuesday after Twitter added a warning phrase to two Trump tweets that called mail-in ballots "fraudulent" and predicted that "mail boxes will be robbed," among other things.

Under the tweets, there is now a link reading "Get the facts about mail-in ballots"

that guides users to a Twitter "moments" page with fact checks and news stories about Trump's unsubstantiated claims.

Trump replied on Twitter, accusing the platform of "interfering in the 2020 Presidential Election" and insisting that "as president, I will not allow this to happen." His 2020 campaign manager, Brad Parscale, said Twitter's "clear political bias" had led the campaign to pull "all our advertising from Twitter months ago." Twitter has banned all political advertising since last November.

The call to expand regulation appeared to fly in the face of long-held conservative principles on deregulation. But some Trump allies, who have alleged bias on the part of tech companies, have questioned whether platforms like Twitter and Face-

book should continue to enjoy liability protections as "platforms" under federal law — or be treated more like publishers, which could face lawsuits over content.

The protections have been credited with allowing the unfettered growth of the internet for more than two decades, but now some Trump allies are advocating that social media companies face more scrutiny.

"Big tech gets a huge handout from the federal government," Republican Sen. Josh Hawley told Fox News. "They get this special immunity, this special immunity from suits and from liability that's worth billions of dollars to them every year. Why are they getting subsidized by federal tax-payers to censor conservatives, to censor people critical of China."

White House letter doesn't explain why watchdogs were fired

Associated Press

WASHINGTON — The White House said that President Donald Trump followed the law when he fired multiple inspectors general in the last two months, but the administration offered no new details about why they were let go.

A White House letter issued

Tuesday in response to concerns from a prominent Republican senator does little to explain the decision-making behind Trump's recent upheaval of the inspector general community. It is unlikely to quell outrage from Democrats and good-government groups who fear the president is mov-

ing to dismantle a post-Watergate network of watchdogs.

Sen. Chuck Grassley, R-Iowa — a longtime, self-appointed defender of inspectors general and congressional oversight — requested that the White House explain the basis for the firings in April and May.

The response Tuesday from White House counsel Pat Cipollone does not provide those details, instead making the points that Trump has the authority to remove inspectors general, that he appropriately alerted Congress and that he selected qualified officials as replacements.

"When the President loses confidence in an inspector general, he will exercise his constitutional right and duty to remove that officer — as did President Reagan when he removed inspectors general upon taking office and as did President Obama when he was in office," Cipollone wrote.

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The Daily Guide to Navigating the European Business Market

Transportation

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WORLD

Hong Kong protesters mass over anthem law

BY ZEN SOO
Associated Press

HONG KONG — Thousands of protesters shouted pro-democracy slogans and insults at police in Hong Kong on Wednesday as lawmakers debated a bill criminalizing abuse of the Chinese national anthem in the semi-autonomous city.

Police massed outside the legislative building ahead of the session and warned protesters that if they did not disperse, they could be prosecuted.

In the Central business district, police raised flags warning protesters to disperse before they shot pepper balls at the crowd and searched several people. More than 50 people in the Causeway Bay shopping district were rounded up and made to sit outside a shopping mall, while riot police with pepper spray patrolled and warned journalists to stop filming.

Nearly 300 people were arrested across Hong Kong for unauthorized assembly, according to Facebook posts by the Hong Kong police force.

The bill would make it illegal to insult or abuse the Chinese national anthem, "March of the Volunteers" in semi-autonomous Hong Kong. Those guilty of the offense would face up to three years in prison and a fine of \$6,450.

Opponents have called the bill a blow to freedom of expression in the city, while Beijing officials have said that it will foster a patriotic spirit and socialist values.

"Western democracies all have laws to protect their national flags, national anthems and emblems. Any insulting acts toward these symbols would also be criminal," pro-Beijing lawmaker Tony Tse said in the legislative debate.

Tse said that the bill would not



Riot police stand guard as a woman tries to cross the street in the Causeway Bay district of Hong Kong on Wednesday.



Riot police guard a protester as a second reading of a controversial national anthem law takes place in Hong Kong on Wednesday.

affect human rights or force people to love the country or support any political power.

"The purpose of this is to protect the dignity of a country," he said.

Pro-democracy lawmaker Charles Mok disagreed, saying that the legislation would not help gain the respect of people and was an excuse to control freedom,

speech and ideas of people.

"We oppose the second reading of the national anthem bill, not because we don't respect the national anthem," Mok said. "The national anthem is a symbol of the country's dignity. If it wants to be respected, then let this government first respect the rights and freedoms of its people first."

The bill was proposed in January and was referred to the Standing Committee of the National People's Congress for review.

India, China in tense standoff at Himalayan frontier

BY ALIAZ HUSSAIN
Associated Press

SRINAGAR, India — Indian and Chinese soldiers are in a bitter standoff in the remote and picturesque Ladakh region, with the two countries amassing soldiers and machinery near the tense frontier, Indian officials said.

The standoff began in early May when large contingents of Chinese soldiers entered deep inside Indian-controlled territory at three places in Ladakh, erecting tents and posts, the officials said.

They said that the soldiers ignored repeated verbal warnings, triggering a yelling match, stone-throwing and even fist fights in at least one place along Pangong Lake, the site of several such confrontations in the past.

The five officials, including two military, two police and one civilian administrator, spoke on condition of anonymity because of the sensitivity of the matter.

Chinese foreign ministry

spokesperson Zhao Lijian said Wednesday that the situation on the China-India border was "generally stable and controllable."

The sides were communicating through both their front-line military units and their respective embassies to "properly resolve relevant issues through dialogue and consultation," Zhao said at a news conference in Beijing.

China is committed to abiding by agreements signed by the sides and to "maintaining peace and stability in the border area between China and India," Zhao said.

The Chinese and Indian soldiers also faced off along a frontier in India's northeastern Sikkim state in early May.

Indian media quoted Gen. Manoj Mukund Naravane, the country's military chief, as saying that the incidents in Ladakh and Sikkim had led to injuries caused by "aggressive behavior on both sides."

President Donald Trump said the U.S. was willing to act as

a mediator between the two Asian giants.

"We have informed both India and China that the United States is ready, willing and able to mediate or arbitrate their now raging border dispute," Trump tweeted Wednesday.

Though skirmishes aren't new, the standoff has escalated in recent weeks at Ladakh's Galwan Valley, where thousands of soldiers from the two countries have camped just a few hundred meters from each other, the Indian officials said.

India is building a strategic road through the Galway Valley connecting the region to an airstrip.

The China-India border dispute covers nearly 2,175 miles of frontier that the two countries call the Line of Actual Control. The countries fought a bitter war in 1962 that spilled into Ladakh.

The most serious dispute is over China's claims that India's northeastern state of Arunachal Pradesh is part of Tibet, which

ary 2019 after spectators from Hong Kong jeered at the anthem during high-profile international soccer matches in 2015. Last year, FIFA fined the Hong Kong Football Association after fans booed the national anthem at a World Cup qualifying game.

Hong Kong was returned to China from British colonial rule in 1997 under a "one country, two systems" framework that promised freedoms not found on the mainland. Anti-China sentiment has risen as residents see Beijing moving to erode those rights.

Mass protests in 2014, known as the Umbrella Revolution, followed the Chinese government's decision to allow direct election of the city leader only after it screened candidates. In the end, the plan for direct elections was dropped.

Legislation proposed in Hong Kong last year that would have allowed residents to be sent to mainland China for trials set off months of demonstrations that at times involved clashes between protesters and police. The legislation was withdrawn.

China's ceremonial parliament, now meeting in Beijing, has moved to enact a national security law for Hong Kong aimed at forbidding secessionist and subversive activity, as well as foreign interference and terrorism. Hong Kong's own government has been unable to pass such legislation due to opposition in the city, and Beijing advanced the law itself after the protests last year.

Asked about possible United States retaliation over the security legislation, Chinese foreign ministry spokesperson Zhao Lijian said in Beijing that China would take necessary steps to fight back against what he called "erroneous foreign interference in Hong Kong's affairs."

Arrests made in probe of Italian mob cemetery

ROME — Italian police have arrested 10 people while investigating the alleged mobster control of a cemetery in northern Italy.

State police alleged that two clans of the 'Ndrangheta crime syndicate determined which firms were allowed to perform burials or construction work like erecting mausoleums at the cemetery in Modena, a town in the affluent region of Emilia-Romagna.

The 'Ndrangheta syndicate is based in southern Italy and is awash in cocaine trafficking proceeds. But mobsters have increasingly infiltrated Italy's productive north in search of more revenue and legitimate businesses to use as fronts for laundering money.

The information leading to Tuesday's arrests came from intercepted phone conversations and from turncoat mobsters, Italian news reports said.

German nurse served tranquilized cookies

BERLIN — A nurse at a German hospital has been convicted of causing dangerous bodily harm for twice serving homemade cookies laced with tranquilizers to her colleagues.

The 54-year-old woman was found guilty Tuesday of putting out the cookies in a kitchenette of the hospital in the town of Bad Nauheim in September 2017 and March 2019, the dpa news agency reported. Several colleagues reported health problems associated with eating the baked goods.

The nurse was sentenced to three years in prison by the Giesing regional court. She was initially charged with attempted murder in one case, but the court found that there was no intent to kill. She denied the allegations.

Locust swarms threaten India's summer crops

NEW DELHI — An invasion by swarms of desert locusts has devastated crops in India's heartland, threatening an already vulnerable region that is struggling with the economic cost of the coronavirus lockdown.

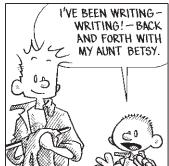
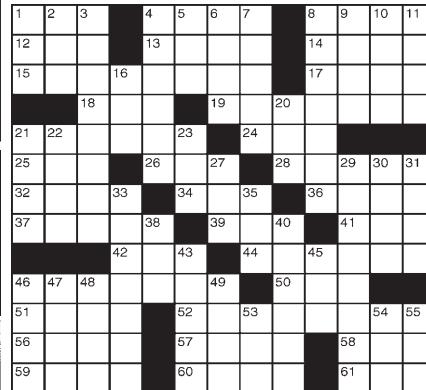
The situation has been particularly grim in central India's Rajasthan, where millions of locusts have been attacking crops since April. They are now appearing in locations where they had not been previously sighted, nibbling their way across large swathes of farmlands in Punjab, Madhya Pradesh and Gujarat states as well.

Authorities estimated that the insects have engulfed more than 123,5000 acres of agricultural land in seven of India's heartland states. The sudden outbreak has prompted them to use vehicle-mounted sprayers, pesticides and drones to stop the infestation.

KL Gurjar, from India's Locust Warning Organization, said that the numbers of the insects could grow immensely before drier weather curbs their spread. He said that higher than normal temperatures have helped locusts spread more rapidly.

From The Associated Press

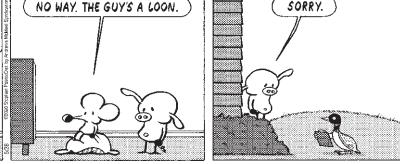
Frazz

**Eugene Sheffer Crossword**

Dilbert



Pearls Before Swine



Non Sequitur



Candorville



Carpe Diem



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They wouldn't have been so hostile if you'd worn googly eyes to announce the layoffs.

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1 Solidify
4 Hawaiian coast
8 Herbal brews
12 — been had!
13 "Sad to say..."
14 Pond growth
15 Most skeptical
17 Prejudice
18 Tuna filler
19 Lacking purpose
21 Eden, for one
24 Scot's denial
25 Meadow
26 Squabble
28 Trattoria offering
32 Grecian vessels
34 Showbiz job
36 Atop
37 "Psycho" setting
39 — the season ...
41 Bank acct. entry
42 Corp. boss
44 Tent anchors
46 Neil Diamond hit
50 Have bills
51 Take the bait
52 One who signed up
56 Part of Q.E.D.
57 Scrambled wd.
58 Wapiti
59 Used car sites

60 Alaskan city**61 D followers****23 Egg quaff****27 Humorist****29 "Clockers"****director****30 Vocal quality****31 Pismires****33 Classified data****35 PX patrons****38 Luau souvenir****40 Fall guy****43 Whale's home****45 Piercing tool****46 First victim****47 Painter Joan****48 Coup d—****49 Part of A.D.****53 Zodiac animal****54 Santa's helper****55 Heart chart (Abbr.)****Answer to Previous Puzzle****5-28****CRYPTOQUIP**

BL QOW DEVD ZVZR PUAC LB
CL XBD AWVXQLQJ EUP DU
EUPA, UQW ILJED BVR LD'B
OUILQJ LQDU ZVRLQJ.

Yesterday's Cryptoquip: MAYHEM AND DESTRUCTION THAT RESULTS WHEN A WHOLE CITY STINKS TO HIGH HEAVEN: REEKING HAVOC.

Today's Cryptoquip Clue: Z equals B

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OPINION

Pompeo's 'Madison Dinners' aren't scandalous

BY DAVID IGNATIUS
Washington Post Writers Group

When assessing the Trump administration, let's make sure that our outrage meters are well-calibrated, so that we don't waste time on trivial topics. A case in point is the recent uproar over the "Madison Dinners" held by Secretary of State Mike Pompeo and his wife, Susan.

I have an unusual personal perspective on this latest "scandal," because my wife and I were among the guests at a dinner hosted by the Pompeos on Nov. 18.

Critics have argued that the secretary was misusing public funds at this dinner and a handful of others, but it didn't feel that way sitting in the room. It seemed like the many other times I've been with previous secretaries in these rooms. The only surprising thing was that I was invited, given what I had written about Pompeo. But I'll get to that later.

There were about 20 guests, as I remember, mostly couples. We had cocktails in the lavish, main Diplomatic Reception Room where the State Department holds big events and then retreated to a smaller room, known as the James Madison Dining Room.

This was supposed to be a social event, as opposed to a business dinner. But in Washington, let's be honest, it's all business, all the time. The other guests included an ambassador and his wife, a senator, a congressman, a former baseball commissioner and his wife, and several prominent business people.

Similar events take place nearly every night in some embassy or think tank, when the city isn't shut down by a pandemic. The idea is that people will do their jobs better if they know each other, have a drink, socialize. I think that's probably right, including for journalists. One reason Washington is such a nasty, partisan place these days is that people don't see each other outside work.

On the way to dinner, Susan Pompeo gathered the guests for a talk about some



NICHOLAS KAMM/AP

Critics have argued that Secretary of State Mike Pompeo misused public funds by hosting his so-called "Madison Dinners" at the State Department.

of the heirlooms — the fine china and porcelain that has been assembled over the years, thanks to private donations that began during the Kennedy administration. She spoke without notes and with detailed knowledge of the items in the collection. She's an active, engaged spouse, now as she was when Pompeo headed the CIA. That strikes me as a positive, not a negative.

Each guest was asked to say a few words. I said something about how, in covering the State Department since the 1980s, I'd learned that American foreign policy is more powerful when it has bipartisan sup-

port, and when the news media are able to cover it freely. Bland, maybe, but that's what I think.

The secretary nodded; so did others around the table. On to the next set of bromides. Some of the comments had a political edge, but for Trump-era Washington, it was mostly pretty tame stuff. It was genial, but it felt like work: People were trying — hard — to be friendly and get to know each other.

The only surprise about the dinner for me was that I was there at all. My wife and I had received our invitations in October. Two weeks before the event, on Nov. 5, I had published a column with the headline: "Where is Mike Pompeo? He's hiding in fear of Donald Trump." The Ukraine investigation was unfolding then, and I wrote that while Trump was attacking former Ambassador Marie Yovanovitch, Pompeo "has essentially been in hiding, protecting himself while his subordinates took the hit."

I didn't mince words: "Pompeo has badly tarnished his reputation in accommodating Trump. He joins the long list of those damaged by their service to this president."

After that column appeared, I called one of Pompeo's top aides and said that if he preferred to withdraw his dinner invitation, I would understand. Nobody should have to socialize with someone if it's going to be uncomfortable. But the aide, after consideration, said no problem, come ahead. Pompeo and his wife were gracious throughout the evening.

I've criticized Pompeo since that dinner, noting, for example, "he has a belligerent streak that even his supporters have long recognized is a severe liability." I've also endorsed policies of his that I thought were sensible. That's the way it's supposed to work. We tell the truth, upside and down. This is journalism, not war.

To be clear: Our democracy faces some severe threats under President Trump, in my opinion. But social events at the State Department with the secretary and his wife are not among them.

Charities serving heroes in new ways amid COVID-19

BY ROBIN RAND AND BRANDON BLACK
Special to Stars and Stripes

The new coronavirus has fundamentally altered the way of life for millions of Americans and citizens around the world.

In a career spanning four decades as an officer in the United States Air Force, the magnitude of this crisis is unlike anything I have witnessed. While I've dealt with a fair share of crises in times of peace and war that demanded the highest level of leadership and decision making, the coronavirus is unlike any other; it is an enemy whose rate of infections are as unbiased as its worldwide transmission.

Like many service-based nonprofits and charities that have pivoted in their business model to support the multi-pronged efforts in quelling the coronavirus, the Gary Sinise Foundation, where I serve as CEO, is no different.

The Gary Sinise Foundation has been supporting military service members, veterans, first responders, their families, and those in need since its founding in 2011. At the beginning of April, we launched Emergency COVID-19 Combat Service, which is a dedicated campaign that augments our mission by supporting medical workers serving at ground zero in the fight combatting the deadly outbreak. Utilizing dona-

tions, we have issued grant funding to 57 first responder departments in 26 states to buy personal protective equipment (PPE) and other lifesaving gear.

At military installations here in the U.S. and overseas in Germany and South Korea, we are working alongside our partners facilitating drive-thru meal pick-ups for service members and their families.

In hard-hit emergency rooms in New York City and Los Angeles, and at medical centers nationwide, we continue to provide free meals to health care workers and staff. Fittingly, we call these meals Serving Heroes as they are a small token of appreciation on behalf of the American people for the courageous work and dedication these frontline heroes exhibit during this existential crisis.

But our work doesn't stop there. Financial aid is reaching the households of veterans, first responders, those serving in the National Guard and Reserve forces, and families of fallen service members. Be it covering the cost of groceries and utility bills, moving costs, or rent and mortgage payments, we can offer relief to those in need.

Thanks to the generosity of countless donors, we can maintain the integrity of our mission while stepping up the cadence of support to reach an even larger population affected by COVID-19.

For our tireless efforts, the silver lining is being a bearer of hope for those we serve. It is the sigh of relief of a Gold Star spouse with children at home upon receiving a grocery gift card and rental assistance. It is the unburdened shoulders of a primary caregiver of a veteran with severe medical needs, who can afford to pay the bills and keep the lights at home after receiving financial aid.

It is hope that emanates from the smiles and experience of momentary peace by medical workers after a long shift in the trenches of the fight, sitting among each other while enjoying a hearty meal. And it is the confidence of hope by firefighters, paramedics, EMTs and law enforcement receiving the gear they need to get the job done.

Service-based nonprofits and charities have an outsized role to play in flattening the curve. By enlisting their workforce and allocating resources to where it is needed most, no matter how big or small the effort, the difference may be life-saving.

The road to recovery may be long, but it is reachable as the country begins to reopen. The fight being waged against COVID-19 is a finite crisis, not a protracted conflict.

By working together in solidarity, this will be our finest hour.

Robin Rand is CEO of the Gary Sinise Foundation. Brandon Black is a copywriter at the Foundation.

OPINION

Pandemic affects disaster season response

By IRWIN REDLENER
Special to The Washington Post

It is already clear that 2020 will be a year for the history books. The world has lurched from one mega-disaster to the next, witnessing devastating wildfires in Australia, plagues of locusts across East Africa and South Asia, and a pandemic that has crippled the global economy.

But we are now at a point that many of us have long feared and for which we are not remotely prepared: the lethal confluence of an uncontrolled pandemic and a slew of large-scale natural disasters.

The pandemic is about to be joined in the headlines by multiple catastrophic events that will cost lives, wreck communities and exact severe economic tolls on affected populations. Last week, catastrophic dam failures and massive flooding forced at least 10,000 people to evacuate their homes in Michigan, which happens to be among the states hardest hit by COVID-19. In South Asia, one of the deadliest cyclones ever in the region swept across Bangladesh and India, reaping devastation where COVID-19 cases are also surging. Both hurricane and wildfire season are quickly approaching in the United States.

These challenges are each daunting on their own, but in the midst of COVID-19 and an exhausted disaster-response infrastructure, are we prepared to cope with multiple disasters at once? Even without a pandemic, health departments and hospital disaster preparedness programs across the United States have been chronically underfunded for more than a decade.

Even the federally maintained strategic national stockpile of emergency equipment and supplies failed to meet urgent needs for mechanical ventilators and personal protective equipment that have been in high demand throughout the pandemic.

Jeff Schlegelmilch, my colleague and deputy director at the National Center for Disaster Preparedness, warns that "our current overall emergency response sys-



KAYTE BOOMER, THE BAY CITY (MICH.) TIMES/AP

People check out the flooding near the H Hotel in downtown Midland, Mich., on May 20. After the Eddenville Dam failed and the Tittabawasee River flooded surrounding areas, many residents were urged to leave their homes.

tems are at a breaking point. It's not just the (strategic national supply); virtually all of our response capabilities are stretched dangerously thin."

Beyond the overall response capacity concerns, conflicting protocols for simultaneous disasters pose unique challenges. How do we reconcile pandemic control guidance to stay at home and practice social distancing with a hurricane-related evacuation order or being housed in a crowded shelter with many people of varying degrees of COVID-19 risk?

Natural-disaster response planning under a pandemic cloud may seem overwhelming. But hurricane season starts June 1, long before we'll see an end to the pandemic threat, so we have no choice. And with climate change fueling severe weather events and increasing vulnerabil-

ties among coastal communities, federal officials are already predicting "above-normal" hurricane activity this year, meaning, again, more need for emergency evacuation and sheltering, all antithetical to pandemic-control measures. There's little time to waste; we've got to figure this out.

In Michigan, it's already happening. Although federal regulators had long identified the two dams as high-risk and in need of structural repair, the necessary mitigation steps weren't taken — ultimately spelling disaster for 42,000 residents downstream of the dam. Fears of COVID-19 had led hundreds of evacuees to opt to sleep in their cars instead of emergency shelters. Without adequate contingency plans and risk-mitigation measures, it's a crisis that could increasingly play out

across the United States over the coming months.

Absent cohesive leadership or direction on the pandemic from the federal government, we've seen state and local officials step up to fill the void, even if the responses have been chaotic and random. But government at all levels will need to step up in this complex disaster environment.

One thing is clear: The United States is unprepared to face multiple crises on top of the global pandemic. Reduced capacity to respond, combined with economic uncertainty and social distancing measures, will complicate and slow recovery efforts. This is particularly concerning because of the extreme threats vulnerable populations face, such as facing poverty and food insecurity.

That, and the reality that emergency response agencies such as the Federal Emergency Management Agency are already overstretched from a series of record-breaking hurricanes and wildfires in recent years, mean that there's a significant need for structural reform. The roles, responsibilities and mission of FEMA may need to be recast, starting with a greater level of coordination and cooperation with other preparedness and response agencies under the auspices of the Defense Department and the Health and Human Services Department, which includes the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention.

There is a significant upside if we manage to get this 2020 challenge of confluent disasters under control. Positive outcomes could — and should — include a much-improved ability to coordinate our considerable potential to prepare for and manage large-scale disasters, a new appreciation of the necessity to work closely with all nations on protecting the planet and a significantly more resilient nation.

We can only hope.

Irwin Redlener, a pediatrician, directs the National Center for Disaster Preparedness at the Earth Institute at Columbia University. He is also a professor at Columbia's Mailman School of Public Health and president emeritus of Children's Health Fund.

Address airborne transmission to stop COVID-19

By JOSEPH ALLEN
Special to The Washington Post

If you've been following advice about COVID-19 from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention or the World Health Organization, chances are you've heard a lot about how the coronavirus can travel through large droplets via coughing and sneezes. You've also probably heard about the virus being transmitted through surfaces. But you probably haven't heard anything about airborne transmission, which many organizations have largely ignored.

That's a mistake. Airborne transmission — caused by small particles that can linger in the air for extended periods of time, unlike droplets from coughs, which settle quickly — is key to understanding why this disease spreads so rapidly in certain circumstances. It's also key to figuring out how best to reopen our country.

I've been warning about airborne transmission of COVID-19 since early February. The explosive transmission on the Diamond Princess cruise ship, as well as other coronavirus outbreaks, constituted telltale signs that airborne transmission was happening. Close contact transmission was likely happening on that cruise ship, but the disease had spread far more quickly than non-airborne diseases typically spread.

Since then, evidence has continuously

pointed to airborne transmission of COVID-19, as my colleague Linsey Marr and I outline in a recent paper. Scientists have detected the virus in places that can be reached only by air, such as ductwork; asymptomatic transmission is occurring, meaning people are spreading this without coughing or sneezing large droplets; and basic aerosol physics shows that people shed an entire continuum of particles when they cough, sneeze or talk, including large particles that settle out quickly and smaller ones that stay afloat for hours.

Why is airborne transmission so important? One reason: super-spreader events. COVID-19 does not spread from one person to the next equally. Some infected with the virus may not spread it to anyone, while others may spread it to dozens or more. In fact, one recent paper found that 10% of cases led to about 80% of the spread.

Such super-spreader events appear to be happening exclusively indoors, where airborne transmission is more likely. Consider the infamous March 10 choir practice in Skagit County, Wash., where one member of the choir infected 52 of 60 other members, leading to two deaths. Local public health departments did an investigation and concluded that all three modes of transmission were likely involved in the outbreak. But this likely under-emphasizes the role that airborne transmission played. Neither surface nor droplet transmission

is likely to have infected so many people in one event. But we do know that when people sing, they emit as many aerosol particles as they do when they're coughing. The practice also happened from 6:30 to 9 p.m., when most buildings turn off their ventilation systems. (Local investigators don't mention building ventilation in their report, so we are left to infer.)

The evidence suggests that mitigating airborne transmission should be at the front of our disease-control strategies for COVID-19. In some ways, that only bolsters public health measures already in place, such as avoiding groups and wearing masks in public. But it also requires that we minimize exposure to airborne pathogens, especially indoors.

To do that, we need to do two things. First, maintain physical distancing. Six feet is good, but 10 feet is better. Second, we must deploy healthy building strategies, such as refreshing stale indoor air. We do this by opening windows in our homes and cars and by increasing the outdoor air ventilation rate in buildings with HVAC systems. Any recirculated air needs to pass through a high-efficiency filter so an infected person in one room doesn't contaminate people in an adjacent room (as happened with the first SARS outbreak). We also have to make sure places such as bathrooms and rooms with infected patients have enough exhaust, and are

negatively pressurized relative to common areas, so any airborne virus is confined to limited areas. This isn't rocket science; as far back as 1860, Florence Nightingale said, "Cleanliness and fresh air from open windows, with unremitting attention to the patient are the only defence a true nurse either asks or needs."

We also need to recognize that some groups are more vulnerable to the ravages of this virus. Just looking at these next few statistics will tell you everything you need to know about where we need to target our intervention efforts. One in 3 deaths nationally are workers or residents of senior homes; nine of the top 10 clusters in the United States occur in meatpacking plants and prisons; the death rate in hot spots is 10-fold higher in areas with lower incomes; and communities of color have nearly five times the odds of infection. If we are to get a handle on this pandemic, it is imperative that we continue to identify those at most risk and provide them precision support.

It's past time we put the scientific record on airborne transmission of COVID-19. Only once we do this can we take control of the super-spreading events that are driving the epidemic.

Joseph Allen is director of the Healthy Buildings program at Harvard T.H. Chan School of Public Health and the author of "Healthy Buildings: How Indoor Spaces Drive Performance and Productivity."

AMERICAN ROUNDUP

K-9 officer helps in arrest of suspect

TN MEMPHIS — Tennessee authorities said a police dog helped in the arrest of a man wanted on a first-degree murder charge out of Arkansas.

The U.S. Marshals Service said in a news release that Kevin D. Curry Jr. was arrested at a house in Memphis. Curry tried to escape the house by going out an upstairs window, but was deterred by a K-9 officer, marshals said.

Curry also had warrants for his arrest out of Shelby County for aggravated robbery, false imprisonment and theft.

Authorities: Grizzly attacked mountain biker

MT BILLINGS — A mountain biker was attacked by a grizzly bear near the southern Montana community of Big Sky, according to authorities.

Montana Fish, Wildlife and Parks spokesperson Morgan Jacobsen told the Billings Gazette that the man was able to walk away and find help. He was airlifted to a hospital with injuries to his face and back and is stable in critical condition.

The man, in his 60s, had likely surprised the bear after rounding a sharp corner on a trail on private property, according to the wildlife agency's initial investigation. Jacobsen said the attack did not appear to be predatory.

The trail is closed during the investigation. Authorities are not searching for the bear.

Woman arrested, another sought in brawl

NY ROCHESTER — Police have one woman in custody and expected to make more arrests after a brawl that left two people hospitalized with stab wounds.

The Rochester Police Department said a crowd of mainly women and teenage girls got embroiled in fights along Weyl Street. Bystander video given to WHEC-TV showed over a dozen people gathered and sometimes scrapping with each other as police intervene.

Police say officers used pepper spray after people ignored orders to break it up.

A 19-year-old woman was arrested on assault and rioting charges. Police are trying to identify a second woman they believe may have been involved in the fight.

Barber gives haircut, saves customer's life

IN KOKOMO — A barber is being credited with saving the life of an 80-year-old customer who had a heart attack after a haircut.

Archie Whittton had asked his Kokomo barber, Jeff Smith, if he could use an outdoor spot to add water to his car radiator.

Smith agreed but after a few minutes didn't see Whittton. He went outside and found him on the ground.

"I was praying under my



MIKE MORONES, THE (FREDERICKSBURG, VA.) FREE LANCE-STAR/AP

This duck's for you

A man driving near the Potomac River in Colonial Beach, Va., displays a positive message on an inflated animal lashed to the roof of a golf cart.

THE CENSUS

61

The approximate number of active piping plover nests in Maine this year. Maine Audubon spotted a record 100 pairs and 61 active nests in the state, the Portland Press Herald reported. Last year, the group found a record 89 nesting pairs and 175 fledged chicks. The number of endangered birds has been increasing in recent years. Laura Minich Zitske, director of the organization's piping plovers project, said there are now over two dozen Maine beaches being monitored for plovers.

Flag from when Lincoln lay in repose displayed

OH COLUMBUS — A flag that flew over the Ohio Statehouse when the body of Abraham Lincoln lay in repose is on display for the next few months, the Capitol Square Review and Advisory Board announced.

The historic Thirty-Six Star American flag is part of an exhibit of Civil War artifacts related to the 1865 Lincoln funeral train. The exhibit is open to the public in the rotunda of the Ohio Statehouse through Veterans Day.

The flag originally was presented to David Nevin Murray of Portsmouth for his contributions to the Union war effort.

Puerto Rican Veterans Memorial damaged

MA BOSTON — Boston police are investigating vandalism to the Puerto

Keith Newell. The three were believed to have escaped through a vent shaft on the roof.

Williams and Newell were captured in Fultondale.

A tracking dog led deputies to Lancaster, who surrendered.

Five ducklings rescued from storm drain

NY SOUTHAMPTON — Five ducklings were rescued from a Long Island storm drain as their mother looked on, police said.

The ducklings were first spotted in the drain on Flanders Road in Riverside, a small community about 14 miles west of Southampton.

It took about an hour for police officers, firefighters and wildlife rescuers to pull the ducklings to safety using nets, Southampton police said.

The mother duck "watched over the entire rescue," the police department said in a news release.

Monday's rescue was at least the second time this month that a family of ducklings have been saved from a Long Island storm drain.

On May 10, a Suffolk County police officer pulled seven ducklings to safety from a drain behind a West Babylon church.

From wire reports

Death of loggerhead turtle investigated

NC MANTEO — The National Park Service said it is investigating after a nesting loggerhead sea turtle was found dead on the Cape Hatteras National Seashore beach, with signs that the creature was run over by a vehicle.

AL TUSCALOOSA — Three men who escaped from a west Alabama jail were recaptured.

The Tuscaloosa County Sheriff's Office told The Tuscaloosa News that Richard Lancaster, 38, was found hiding under a mobile home in Northport.

Lancaster escaped the Tuscaloosa County Jail along with Seth Schuyler Williams and Cameron

FACES

Fallon apologizes for blackface skit on 'SNL' in 2000

Jimmy Fallon has apologized for doing an impersonation of fellow comic Chris Rock while in blackface during a 2000 episode of "Saturday Night Live."

The NBC "Tonight Show" host tweeted Tuesday that "there is no excuse for this."

Discussion of Fallon's 20-year-old skit surfaced this week after a video of it was posted online. According to Variety, it was first posted on Twitter by a user named "chefboyodear," and showed Fallon, as Rock, appearing on a talk show.

Fallon tweeted that it was a terrible decision to impersonate Rock, also a former "SNL" cast member.

"I am very sorry for making this unquestionably offensive decision and thank all of you for holding me accountable," he wrote.

The Twitter user who posted the clip mentioned Megan Kelly, who was taken off the "Today" show and eventually left NBC News after suggesting in 2018 that it was OK for children to wear blackface in Halloween costumes. She apologized for her remark.

The history of minstrel shows and movies where white performers donned blackface to mock blacks has made its use considered offensive today.



Jimmy Fallon tweeted an apology for wearing blackface to imitate fellow comic Chris Rock on "Saturday Night Live."

California sues CBS over sexual misconduct

The state of California filed a lawsuit Tuesday against CBS, Disney and producers of the long-running series "Criminal Minds," alleging that the show's cinematographer engaged in rampant sexual misconduct for years.

The suit filed in Los Angeles Superior Court by the California Department of Fair Employment and Housing says the show's production team knew of and condoned the behavior of cinematographer Gregory St. Johns throughout the 14 years he spent on "Criminal Minds," and fired more than a dozen men who resisted his unwanted groping and sexual harassment.

The popular crime procedural, which ran on CBS from 2005 until this year, was co-produced by CBS and the Disney-owned ABC Signature Studios.

Those entities along with production company Entertainment Partners, several producers and St. Johns are named as defendants in the suit, which seeks back pay and other damages for the crew members who were fired.

From The Associated Press



NETFLIX/AP

Steve Carell, center, stars in the Netflix comedy series "Space Force," available for streaming Friday.

New this week: 'Space Force,' Gaga

Associated Press

Here's a collection curated by The Associated Press' entertainment journalists of what's arriving on TV, streaming services and music platforms this week.

Television

Steve Carell, the hapless boss of "The Office," is back with a new comedy series. In Netflix's 10-episode "Space Force," he plays Mark R. Naird, a four-star general whose dream job is running the Air Force. Instead, he's chosen to lead the newly formed military branch charged with putting Americans back on the moon and dominating space. Carell heads a cast that includes John Malkovich and Lisa Kudrow and Jimmy O. Yang. The comedy is out Friday, accompanied by "Inside Joke: Space Force," a behind-the-scenes podcast hosted by Yang and with new episodes recorded on Mondays and Thursdays.

"*Prideland*": Actor Dylan Burnside ("Pose") hosts a six-part series exploring LGBTQI life in the South and the region's changing attitudes. Burnside isn't an outsider: In the first episode, he shares his experience as a "queer boy" who left his native Pensacola, Fla., to be what he calls his authentic self. Returning to the region, he is both heartened by what he finds and clear-eyed about remaining challenges. The series debuted Tuesday on "PBS Voices," a new documentary-focused YouTube channel. Burnside also hosts a companion special airing June 12 on PBS and PBS.org.

AMC's "Quiz" revisits the 2011 scandal of a couple accused of trying to cheat the British version of "Who Wants to Be a Millionaire" of \$1 million. "Quiz" has unimpeachable credentials: It was written by playwright James Graham ("Ink"), directed by filmmaker Stephen Frears ("The Queen"), and

stars Matthew Macfadyen ("Succession"), Sian Clifford ("Fleabag") and Michael Sheen ("Masters of Sex"). The three-part drama debuts Sunday night in the States, but will air on AFN-Spectrum on June 5, 12 and 19.

— TV Writer Lynn Elber

Film

Studio Ghibli Marathon: HBO Max, which launched Wednesday, has many films available, but arguably the most exciting is its Studio Ghibli library. It's the first time the animated classics from Hayao Miyazaki and Isao Takahata have been available on a streaming platform in the U.S. There are enough greats to keep the family occupied for weeks. But a few Miyazaki-savvy pre-teens recommend "My Neighbor Totoro," "Spirited Away," "Porco Rosso" and "Ponyo" to get you started.

"*The Vest of Night*": Friday night, head over to Prime Video to check out a debut feature that's earned its director, Andrew Patterson, comparisons to a young Christopher Nolan. Set over the course of one night in 1950s New Mexico, the film follows two teenagers who notice an unusual audio frequency on the radio and take it upon themselves to investigate. Rolling Stone critic David Fear said, "It knows exactly how to work its retro 'Twilight Zone' mojo without feeling like a third-generation copy of film-brat nostalgia."

"*The High Note*": Also available Friday for rental from Focus Features is a feel-good musical starring Tracee Ellis Ross as a world-famous singer (no, she's not playing her mom) feeling confined by societal expectations around her age, and her personal assistant (Dakota Johnson) who has bigger ambitions for herself.

"*Uncut Gems*": If you missed Adam Sandler's much-praised performance as a diamond district dealer in "Uncut Gems" in

theaters this year, the high-octane thriller from the Safdie Brothers began streaming Monday on Netflix.

— AP Film Writer Lindsey Bahr

Music

Lady Gaga: After taking a departure from her electro pop sound with 2016's "Joanne" and 2018's "A Star Is Born," Lady Gaga is ready to just dance with her new album out Friday. "Chromatica" features the upbeat singles "Stupid Love" and "Rain on Me," with Ariana Grande, Elton John and K-pop girl group Blackpink also make appearances on the album, which was originally supposed to be released in April but was pushed back because of the coronavirus pandemic.

Rap bars from behind bars: While serving time at San Quentin State Prison, producer David Jassy taught inmates how to write and produce music. Now an album of those songs recorded at the prison and backed by J. Cole, Common and Kim Kardashian West will be released Friday. In 2010, Jassy was convicted of murder, assault with a deadly weapon and aggravated battery. Earlier this year his sentence was commuted by California Gov. Gavin Newsom, who said in his letter that Jassy had been "extremely committed to his rehabilitation." The new album is called "San Quentin Mixtape, Vol. 1" and features 17 young rappers telling their stories.

#OUTLOUD Raising Voices: Originally planned to debut the South by Southwest festival, "#OUTLOUD Raising Voices is coming to Facebook this week to kick off Pride month, which begins Monday. The 10-episode, five-week concert series will include performances from Kesha, Greyson Chance, Betty Who, Wrabel, the Aces, Allie X, Candis Cayne, Vincint and more. The series will air on Facebook on Wednesdays and Thursdays at 8 p.m. EDT.

— Music Editor Mesfin Fekadu



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MLB

Players say they are disappointed by MLB proposal

Some would see salaries cut by more than 77%

BY RONALD BLUM
Associated Press

NEW YORK — A rookie at the major league minimum would keep about 47% of his original salary this year while multimillionaire stars Mike Trout and Gerrit Cole would lose more than 77% under a sliding-scale proposal by big league teams that players found "extremely disappointing."

Major League Baseball made the proposal to the players' union on Tuesday during a digital meeting rather than the 50-50 revenue-sharing plan that owners initially approved for their negotiators on May 11, several people familiar with the plan told The Associated Press. The people spoke on condition of anonymity because details were not announced.

In addition to its reaction on the economics, the union said "the sides also remain far apart on health and safety protocols."

aimed at starting the pandemic-delayed season around the Fourth of July. The sides have been grappling with how to aim for an opening day originally scheduled for March 26 but pushed back because of the new coronavirus.

"We made a proposal to the union that is completely consistent with the economic realities facing our sport," MLB said in a statement. "We look forward to a responsive proposal from the MLBA."

Players agreed March 26 to a deal in which they would receive prorated shares of their salaries based on what percentage of each team's 162-game schedule is played. In exchange, players were guaranteed that if no games are played they would receive service time for 2020 matching what they accrued in 2019.

MLB has proposed an 82-game schedule and says the March 26 deal would result in huge losses



TONY GUTIERREZ/AP

A view of Globe Life Field, the new home of the Texas Rangers. **MLB estimates 2020 player salaries would drop from roughly \$4 billion to \$1.23 billion under a proposed economic plan by the owners.**

because it did not necessarily account for a season with no fans in ballparks.

Under the plan given the union Tuesday, a player would keep 90% of his salary up to the \$563,500 big league minimum, including those with lower salaries while on optional or outright assignments in the minor leagues, according to information obtained by the AP.

The amount would decrease to 72.5% from \$563,501 though \$1 million, to 50% from \$1,000,001 through \$5 million, to 40% from \$5,000,001 through \$10 mil-

lion, to 30% from \$10,000,001 through \$20 million and to 20% from \$20,000,001 and up.

Each player's figure then would be prorated by the 82/162 formula agreed to in March, causing a loss of 49.4%.

There would be an additional \$200 million in postseason bonus money that would be given in a higher proportion to players with larger salaries.

As a result, a player at the minimum would earn \$262,217, according to calculations MLB gave the union. A \$1 million salary would be cut to \$434,143,

\$5 million to \$1,642,113, \$10 million to \$2,947,895, \$15 million to \$4,049,457, \$20 million to \$5,151,099, \$25 million to \$6,048,520, \$30 million to \$6,945,942 and \$35 million to \$7,843,363.

MLB estimates 2020 player salaries would drop from roughly \$4 billion to \$1.23 billion, including the postseason bonus pool.

The revenue-sharing plan earlier this month was met with immediate hostility from the union. The day owners gave their negotiators the go-ahead.



BEN MARGOT/AP

The Oakland Athletics are placing their scouts and a significant number of other front office employees on furlough, suspending pay for minor leaguers and cutting the salaries of other executives.

As's furlough scouts, end minor league pay

BY JOSH DUBOW
Associated Press

The Oakland Athletics are placing their scouts and a significant number of other front office employees on furlough, suspending pay for minor leaguers and cutting the salaries of other executives as part of a cost-cutting move in response to the COVID-19 pandemic.

As's owner John Fisher announced the moves Tuesday in a rare public statement on what he called a "tremendously difficult day."

"Baseball is more than a job — it is a way of life," Fisher wrote

in a letter to fans and staff. "People who work for our team are our family — our very foundation — and they work tirelessly to help the A's compete in this most precious game. COVID-19 has brought a tragic loss of life and sickness to so many in our community, and it has impacted us all in ways we could have never imagined."

The furloughs for the scouts and other front office personnel will begin next week, although the team's amateur scouts are expected to stay on through the draft on June 10-11.

Minor leaguers will stop receiving \$400 weekly stipends

next week.

The A's will continue to pay the health care, 401k and pension costs for their employees.

The team also will cut pay for all front office employees making more than \$60,000.

"I know that many of you will wonder why the A's are cutting costs now," Fisher wrote. "Nobody knows how this pandemic will evolve over the long term. What is clear is that our revenues will be dramatically reduced this year. None of this diminishes the pain of today's actions, but it is an honest acknowledgement of the circumstances of the moment."



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HORSE RACING/AUTO RACING/SPORTS BRIEFS

2 Baffert horses test positive for banned substance

BY BETH HARRIS
Associated Press

LOS ANGELES — Two horses from the barn of two-time Triple Crown-winning trainer Bob Baffert have tested positive for a banned substance, according to published reports.

The New York Times and Louisville Courier-Journal on Tuesday cited unidentified sources in reporting the positive tests occurred during the recent meet at Oaklawn Park in Arkansas.

According to the Times, one of the horses to test positive was Charlatan, an undefeated colt considered to be a top contender for the Belmont Stakes on June 20. That race will open this year's Triple Crown series, which has been rescheduled because of the coronavirus pandemic. Charlatan won a split-division of the Arkansas Derby on May 2.

The Times reported Baffert's other horse to test positive is Gamine, a 3-year-old filly who won at Oaklawn on the same day. The newspaper said both horses tested positive for lidocaine, a regulated anesthetic widely used in equine medicine.

Lidocaine is considered a Class 2 drug by the Association of Racing Commissioners International, and use of it carries a penalty of a 15- to 60-day suspension and a

fine of \$500 to \$1,000 for a first offense, the Times said. Without mitigating circumstances, a horse would be disqualified and forfeit its purse. Charlatan earned \$300,000 for first place in the Arkansas Derby.

"The rules of the Arkansas Racing Commission mandate confidentiality concerning any investigation into an alleged rule violation until there is a written decision of the Stewards," Baffert said in a written statement. "I am extremely disappointed that, in this instance, the Commission has not followed its own rules on confidentiality."

"I am hoping for an expedited investigation and look forward to being able to speak soon about any written decision of the Stewards, if and when it becomes necessary and I'm allowed to under the Commission's confidentiality rules," he said.

Reached by text Tuesday night, Baffert told The Associated Press he didn't want to comment beyond his statement. Asked how premature it is to leak an initial test before a second test is conducted, Baffert said, "I think it's a great question that someone besides me should answer."

Baffert has requested a second round of testing on his horses' samples, which he is allowed to do, according to the Times.

Charlatan is ranked fourth on the qualifying points leaderboard for the Kentucky Derby, a race Baffert has won five times. It has been rescheduled for Sept. 5.

No one at the Arkansas Racing Commission was reachable after hours Tuesday night.

Scoreboard

North Carolina Education Lottery 200

NASCAR Gander Outdoors Truck Series

At Charlotte Motor Speedway

Concord, N.C.

Last lap: 1. Chase Elliott, 134 miles

(Start position in parentheses)

1. (26) Chase Elliott, Chevrolet, 134 laps, 0.000
2. (16) Kyle Busch, Toyota, 134, 0.
3. (30) Zane Smith, Chevrolet, 134, 46.
4. (27) Matt Crafton, Ford, 134, 39.
5. (21) Sheldon Creed, Chevrolet, 134, 32.
6. (3) John Hunter Nemechek, Toyota, 134, 0.
7. (30) Johnny Sauter, Chevrolet, 134, 30.
8. (7) Ty Majeski, Chevrolet, 134, 35.
9. (2) Matt Crafton, Ford, 134, 30.
10. (11) Ben Rhodes, Ford, 134, 39.
11. (27) Ross Chastain, Chevrolet, 134, 0.
12. (1) Austin Cindric, Ford, 134, 25.
13. (2) Tyler Ankrum, Chevrolet, 134, 26.
14. (6) Christian Eckes, Toyota, 134, 23.
15. (10) Matt Tifft, Toyota, 134, 22.
16. (25) Derek Kraus, Toyota, 134, 21.
17. (17) Tate Fagiano, Chevrolet, 134, 20.

18. (31) Codie Rohrbaugh, Chevrolet, 134, 18.
19. (15) Austin Wayne Self, Chevrolet, 134, 18.
20. (33) Jessie Little, Chevrolet, 134, 0.
21. (33) Tanner Gray, Ford, 134, 16.
22. (33) Timmy Hill, Chevrolet, 134, 15.
23. (1) Matt Tifft, Toyota, 134, 14.
24. (34) Kornor Forristier, Toyota, 133, 13.
25. (19) Spencer Boyd, Chevrolet, 133, 12.
26. (29) Jennifer Jo Cobb, Chevrolet, 133, 11.

27. (13) Natalie Decker, Chevrolet, 132, 10.
28. (40) Bayley Currey, Chevrolet, 132, 0.
29. (20) Clay Griffiths, Toyota, 132, 0.
30. (10) Matt Friesen, Chevrolet, 130, 13.
31. (18) Jordan Anderson, Chevrolet, 130, 5.

32. (23) Cory Roper, Ford, 129, 5.
33. (37) T.J. Bell, Chevrolet, 127, 5.
34. (2) Matt Tifft, Toyota, 126, 19.
35. (4) Matt Crafton, Ford, 107, 17.
36. (24) Garrett Smithley, Chevrolet, garage, 0.

37. (11) Todd Gilliland, Ford, accident, 102, 12.
38. (33) Brennan Poole, Toyota, garage, 83, 0.
39. (14) Jesse Iwulu, Toyota, accident, 74, 0.
40. (28) Spencer Davis, Toyota, transmission, 54, 0.

Race statistics

Average speed of race winner: 111.971 mph.

Time of race: 1 hour, 47 minutes, 42 seconds.

Caution flags: 7 for 37 laps.

Lead changes: 1 among 10 drivers.

Fastest lap: 1:30.822 by T.J. Bell, 119.

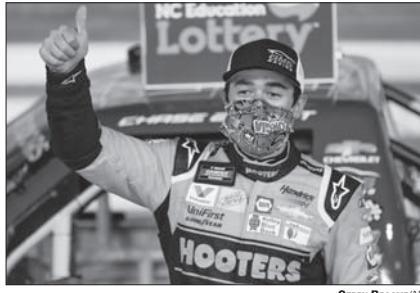
M.Crafton, 20; A.Hill, 21-26; R.Chastain, 23-22; Z.Smith, 27-28; C.Elliott 44-46; B.Rhodes, 64; C.Elliott, 65-67; B.Rhodes, 68; K.Busch, 70-71; T.Gilliland, 72-73; A.Hill, 74-75; A.Hill, 93; K.Busch, 94-96; J.Smith, 97-107; J.Sauter, 108-110; C.Elliott, 111-132.

Lead times (laps led): C.Elliott, 3 times for 47 laps; A.Hill, 3 times for 26 laps; K.Busch, 3 times for 25 laps; T.Gilliland, 2 times for 15 laps; R.Chastain, 1 time for 6 laps; M.Crafton, 2 times for 6 laps; J.Sauter, 1 time for 5 laps; B.Moffitt, 1 time for 5 laps; B.Rhodes, 3 times for 2 laps; R.Lessard, 1 time for 2 laps.

Wingless lap times (laps led):

Top 16 in Points: 1. A.Hill, 120; 2. J.Sauter, 98; 3. C.Elliott, 95; 4. B.Rhodes, 95; 5. B.Moffitt, 95; 6. S.Creed, 90; 7. G.Effinger, 81; 8. C.Eckes, 78; 9. T.Ankrum, 76; 10. T.Gilliland, 74; 11. R.Chastain, 74; 12. D.Kraus, 69; 13. T.Gilliland, 66; 14. T.Majeski, 61; 15. R.Lessard, 61; 16. T.Gray, 60.

Baffert



GERRY BROOME/AP

Chase Elliott celebrates after winning the NASCAR Truck Series race at Charlotte Motor Speedway on Tuesday in Concord, N.C.

Elliott digs at Busch after Trucks victory

BY STEVE REED
Associated Press

formed about Elliott's bow.

"Imitation is the strongest form of flattery or whatever it is. But, ummm, that's cute," Busch said sarcastically.

"It was a spur-of-the-moment thing," Elliott said. "I thought we had so much fun with this with Kevin (Harvick) putting up the money and Kyle was a good sport. It's not a dig at anybody. It's just having fun. It was about beating him and we did and had some fun with it."

Harvick pledged before the race to donate \$50,000 to Covid-19 relief for any full-time Cup driver who finished ahead of Busch. Marcus Lemonis, the CEO of Gander RV & Outdoors, which sponsors the Truck Series, agreed to match Harvick's pledge.

The win comes six days after Busch wrecked Elliott in a Cup Series race at Darlington and two days after Elliott's decision to pit late in the Coca-Cola 600 opened the door for Brad Keselowski to steal an almost certain win.

"It doesn't make up for Sunday, but it was still a really good night," Elliott said.

Briefly

Pac-12 to allow voluntary workouts at schools next month for all sports

Associated Press

The Pac-12 Conference will allow voluntary workouts on campus for all sports beginning June 15, subject to the decision of each individual school and where allowed by local and state guidelines, the conference announced Tuesday.

The decision was made by the presidents and chancellors of the conference schools and followed the announcement last week by the NCAA that schools can reopen for voluntary activities beginning next Monday. The Pac-12's COVID-19 medical advisory committee created a series of guidelines and protocols for schools to follow once they decide to open for individual workouts.

"As states have either already opened or begin to open up access to parks, gyms and other training facilities, student-athletes should have the option at this time to be in, what for many, will be a much safer environment on campus, where they can have access to the best available health, well-being and training support," Pac-12 Commissioner Larry Scott said.

It's unlikely all 12 schools will open their doors at the same time. States with schools in the conference are reopening at different paces and that will affect when athletes can return to campus for workouts. Arizona has reopened many of its services and said professional sports can resume, while California, Washington and Oregon have been slower and

more restrictive in allowing the resumption of small gatherings.

NWSL to hold 25-game tournament in Utah

Pro soccer returns to the U.S. next month when the National Women's Soccer League starts a 25-game tournament in a pair of stadiums in Utah that will be kept clear of fans to protect players from the coronavirus.

Players from the nine teams will train and live at two Salt Lake City-area hotels, the league announced Wednesday. All players will be tested for COVID-19 before leaving for Utah, and then will be regularly screened during their monthlong stay.

No fans will be allowed into the Zions Bank or Rio Tinto stadiums, two suburban Salt Lake City venues that will host the action.

The tournament begins June 27, with games to be televised and streamed by CBS and its online and broadcast affiliates.

Premier League clubs approve training plan

MANCHESTER, England — The Premier League is on course to restart next month after clubs approved plans on Wednesday to resume contact training even as some players are concerned about taking to the field again during the coronavirus pandemic.

The vote by the clubs came

after gaining clearance from the government for players to work together as a squad as restrictions are eased across England.

Texas Tech guard turns pro in native Italy

LBBOCK, Texas — Texas Tech guard Davide Moretti is skipping his final season to turn pro with Olimpia Milano is his home country of Italy.

The EuroLeague club announced the signing of Moretti on Tuesday, ending a three-year Texas Tech career.

Moretti played a supporting role in helping the Red Raiders reach the NCAA championship game during the 2018-19 season.

NHL

Playoff matchups

Qualifying round tough to predict

By STEPHEN WHYNO
Associated Press

The NHL's regular season is over and the chase for the Stanley Cup is on if hockey returns this summer.

The league settled on a 24-team postseason format that Calgary Flames captain Mark Giordano said.

"I think you go 12 and 12. More teams get in this year, maybe a couple of byes at the top and play it out."

The top four teams in the Eastern and Western Conferences get byes into the final 16 except for a handful of round-robin games to determine seeding. That's Boston, Tampa Bay, Washington and Philadelphia in the East and St. Louis, Colorado, Vegas and Dallas in the West.

"It rewards those teams that had a good regular season, and it's going to serve as almost a little bit of a pre-season for those top four in each conference," said NBC Sports analyst Patrick Sharp, who won the Cup three times as a player with Chicago. "There's standings on the line, and you want to position yourself the best you can, but it's an opportunity for those guys to kind of get the rust off and get ready for a tough opponent because whenever they face in that first round is going to be coming off a pretty intense series."

The top seeds would face the winners of these eight opening-round, best-of-five series:

Return: Three-week training camp will be held before season begins

FROM BACK PAGE

Another concern is how long it might take players, including the dozens who have spent the past few months with their families overseas, to return to their home cities and whether they will have to spend two weeks self-quarantining upon their return. There might be a solution for that.

"We've reached an understanding with the Canadian government that players can cross the Canadian border as well both internationally from overseas but also from the United States so they can return to their home city without problem," Deputy Commissioner Bill Daly said.

The next phase will feature a roughly three-week training camp starting no earlier than July 1. The league hopes all 24 teams are cleared to hold full practices on local health regulations.

There are also outstanding questions on health and safety protocols, and determining which two cities will serve as hubs. Bet-

man announced the NHL has narrowed the list to 10: Chicago, Columbus, Ohio, Dallas, Las Vegas, Pittsburgh and Minneapolis/St. Paul in the U.S. and Edmonton, Toronto and Vancouver in Canada.

Should all those issues be resolved, the NHL can then proceed with playing games.

On the bright side, the NHL still has time on its hands in the event of needing a contingency plan, with Bettman saying the 2020-21 season could start as late as January.

"If it has to slide more, then it'll slide," Bettman said, referring to the timetable. "There's a reason that we're not giving you dates now because anybody who gives you a date is guessing, and we think we'd rather take a more holistic approach to doing this."

Hockey is benefiting from what's been an effective and collaborative approach conducted by its Return to Play commit-

tee, which features player and league representatives. The committee not only proposed the 24-team format, but also devised a list of protocols for teams to follow once players return to their facilities.

Teams will be responsible for testing players during workouts and training camp, with the league taking over when games begin.

Daly said players would be tested for COVID-19 daily and he added that medical advisers contend, for now, "that one single positive test depending on the circumstance should not necessarily shut the whole operation down."

"Obviously we can't be in a situation where we have an outbreak, and that will affect our ability to continue playing," Daly said. "But a single positive test or isolated positive tests throughout a two-month tournament should not necessarily mean an end to the tournament."

The decision to call off the 189 regular-

season games that were not played ended the season for Buffalo, New Jersey, Anaheim, Los Angeles, San Jose, Ottawa and Detroit.

Those seven teams will now prepare for one of potentially two draft lotteries to determine the top 15 selections. The lottery will be held June 26, with another scheduled later depending on which of the remaining eight teams qualify for the 16-team playoff.

Sabres co-owner and president Kim Pegula said the emphasis was placed on completing the season and ensuring the Stanley Cup will be awarded, even if it came at Buffalo's expense. The Sabres extended their playoff drought to a ninth season, finishing just behind Montreal.

"We're all trying to find that right chord, what's right for the league," Pegula told The AP. "It's one of those times when you've got to look at it that way."

AP sports writer Dave Campbell contributed.



NAM Y. HUH/AP

Eastern Conference

No. 5 Pittsburgh Penguins vs. No. 12 Montreal Canadiens

Penguins captain and three-time champion Sidney Crosby doesn't mind going directly into the playoffs, given the limited timing. His reward is a matchup against elite goaltender Carey Price and the Montreal Canadiens, who had 15 fewer points than Pittsburgh when the season was halted.

Season series: Penguins won two of three.

What Sharp says: "Price could be key in this series. ... Pittsburgh is a team that's going to get healthy, hopefully. They had some key guys injured before the shutdown that were going to miss significant game time during the stretch."

No. 6 Carolina Hurricanes vs. No. 11 New York Rangers

Carolina was one of two teams (along with Tampa Bay) that voted against the playoff format. The Hurricanes shouldn't need emergency goaltender David Ayres anymore with Petr Mrazek and James Reimer healthy, and Dougie Hamilton ready to return on defense.

Season series: Rangers won all four.

What Sharp says: "I like the way (the Hurricanes) compete, and they can shut games down with the best of them. Now they got their goaltenders healthy, Dougie coming back, I like their chances. ... They were an exciting team to watch, the New York Rangers. (Winger Artemi) Panarin is making everybody better offensively."

No. 7 New York Islanders vs. No. 10 Florida Panthers

This is a rematch of a 2016 series, but basically everything has changed for these teams since. Barry Trotz has put his stamp on the Islanders, and three-time Cup finalist John Tavares is in his first season with high-flying Florida.

Season series: Islanders won all three.

What Sharp says: "It's two different styles of play. The Islanders and Barry Trotz (and GM Lou Lamoriello), they're going to be a very disciplined, defense-oriented team ... That neutral zone's going to be clogged. And for a team like the Panthers that shows that this season that they would trade a few chances to get a few chances ... It's going to be a tough matchup for them."

No. 8 Toronto Maple Leafs vs. No. 9 Columbus Blue Jackets

If Toronto is to bring the Cup home for the first time since 1967, Auston Matthews and Co. first have to deal with the pesky Blue Jackets, who eliminated the top-seed Lightning in the first round last year.

Season series: Blue Jackets won two games.

What Sharp says: "You know what you're facing with the Blue Jackets. It's going to be an in-your-face game, a hard-nosed matchup up. And Toronto, you finally get away from Boston but now you've got to face a team like Columbus that we saw how well they played against Tampa Bay last year, so it doesn't get easier for Toronto."

No. 9 Edmonton Oilers vs. No. 11 Chicago Blackhawks

Edmonton Oilers center Connor McDavid, right, and Blackhawks center Ryan Carpenter vie for the puck during the first period of their game on March 5 in Chicago. McDavid gets just his second taste of the playoffs in his fifth season. The Oilers will face the Blackhawks in a best-of-five series after the NHL announced a 24-team, straight-to-playoffs format for resuming the season.

No. 10 Tampa Bay Lightning vs. No. 12 Arizona Coyotes

If Tampa is to bring the Cup home for the first time since 1986, Auston Matthews and Co. first have to deal with the pesky Blue Jackets, who eliminated the top-seed Lightning in the first round last year.

Season series: Blue Jackets won two games.

What Sharp says: "You know what you're facing with the Blue Jackets. It's going to be an in-your-face game, a hard-nosed matchup up. And Toronto, you finally get away from Boston but now you've got to face a team like Columbus that we saw how well they played against Tampa Bay last year, so it doesn't get easier for Toronto."

Western Conference

No. 5 Edmonton Oilers vs. No. 12 Chicago Blackhawks

What Sharp says: "McDavid gets just his second taste of the playoffs in his fifth season. No. 97, who had 97 points in the regular season, gets to ride alongside NHL leading scorer Leon Draisaitl against an aging Blackhawks squad."

Season series: Blackhawks won two of three.

What Sharp says: "I don't know if you

can slow (McDavid) down in a playoff series easier than you can in the regular season. ... That's a tough matchup for anybody, especially Chicago, a team that gives up more prime scoring chances than anybody that's left in the playoff group."

No. 6 Nashville Predators vs. No. 11 Arizona Coyotes

Nashville and Arizona each made a major in-season move. The Predators replaced coach Peter Laviolette with John Hynes, and the Coyotes traded for 2018 MVP Taylor Hall. Only one of them will get into the final 16.

Season series: Split two games.

What Sharp says: "It seems like the coaching change did make a little bit of difference for the Preds. ... Arizona is a team that has trouble scoring goals, but they can clear the boards and defend. They have great goaltending, they keep the puck out of the net at a pretty good clip. Those are teams that are going to be tough to play in this short, best-of-five series."

No. 7 Vancouver Canucks vs. No. 10 Minnesota Wild

The Canucks' goalie Jacob Markstrom had a knee injury, and he had the benefit of skating at home in Sweden during

the pause. Minnesota interim coach Dean Evason gets a chance to show he deserves the full-time job.

Season series: Wild won two of three.

What Sharp says: "They've got some core pieces there in Vancouver that are going to get a taste of the big stage. It's going to be a tough series. It's going to be a good one for their development. (The Wild) have that one last crack to show what they have as a group. This might be the last chance that this core group in Minnesota has to kind of win a few playoff rounds."

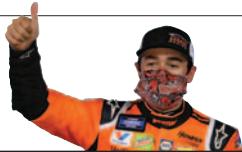
No. 8 Calgary Flames vs. No. 9 Winnipeg Jets

The constantly changing Flames face the continuity of the Jets, and the winner of this series could make some real noise in the West. Some big changes are probably coming in the loser.

Season series: Jets won only meeting in overtime.

What Sharp says: "I seemed like (the Flames) were starting to find their groove. They're facing a team in Winnipeg that right before the shutdown, they were playing some intense hockey. They knew what they were up against. They kind of dug in for the playoffs."

SPORTS



Measure of revenge

Elliott ends Busch's seven-race streak in Truck Series » Page 22

Return to play?



A crew member cleans the glass before helping to cover the ice at American Airlines Center in Dallas after the NHL season was suspended on March 12.

ASHLEY LANDIS, DALLAS MORNING NEWS / TNS

NHL unveils 24-team playoff format for rest of season

BY JOHN WAWROW AND STEPHEN WHYNO

Associated Press

Rosy as the news might sound, Gary Bettman made no promises in announcing the NHL has the framework of a plan in place to return to the ice.

"We hope," the commissioner said, "that this is a step back toward normalcy."

The league and its players overcame a significant hurdle Tuesday when Bettman formally unveiled a 24-team expanded playoff format in which games could start as early as late July in two yet-to-be-determined cities.

The plan — as with anything involving forming a timetable around the coronavirus pandemic — comes with no certainties.

"Obviously, there are lots of things to be done," Bettman said, noting health and safety come first. "But this marks a very important step along the journey that we're undertaking."

Under the plan, the top four teams in each conference have already qualified for the round of 16, and will play a round-robin tournament to determine seeding. The remaining eight teams in each conference will be seeded and take part in best-of-five series to determine the remaining playoff teams.

The NHL might be ahead of Major League Baseball and the NBA in terms of when and how it might return to action, but numerous questions remain before a puck is dropped in a meaningful game for the first time since hockey was put on pause in March.

"You have to do these in a sequence. You have to prepare for what we hope is going to be a consensus that we can and should play," NHL Players' Association executive director Don Fehr told The Associated Press. "This is but a meaningful start, I think. But it's only a start."

Timing is an issue. The NHL projects players might be allowed to begin returning for voluntary workouts next week.

SEE RETURN ON PAGE 23

Inside: First-round matchups for each conference, Page 23



CHARLES KRUPA/AP

NHL Commissioner Gary Bettman speaks to the media before Game 1 of the Stanley Cup Final on May 27, 2019. Bettman unveiled a 24-team, straight-to-playoffs format the league will use if it can clear the other hurdles to resume its season.

Players unhappy with MLB's salary proposal

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